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*A present to Anne  
Grimes from her mother*

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L. P.

Dear

Friend

at home



Painted by Rubens.

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"The"

"Rose Books."

"Being a selection of"

"Interesting Stories;"

2

"The"

"Poor People"

"Being a selection of"

"Interesting Stories"



THE

**ROSE BUD:**

BEING A SELECTION OF



INTERESTING STORIES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF PETER PARLEY.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY NAFIS & CORNISH,

278 PEARL STREET.



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# THE ROSE BUD.

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## THE DEAD AND THE LIVING HUSBAND.

It is said that there are realities in life more sad and wild than the boldest inventions of fancy ; and when they occur at the gate almost of the calm dwelling, and near the happy fireside, they startle us far more than if met with in wilder scenes, on the stormy wave, or on the desert shore. Yet the wave and the bold shore were not wanting in the strange scene of the following tale, which is perfectly authentic, and occurred in the year 1812, in the mining district of the west of Cornwall.

The shafts or excavation, from which the rich ores were drawn, bordered, in some parts, so closely on the sea, as to be carried here and there even under its bed ; the miners often heard the rushing of the waves above their heads, and the howling of the winds : these sounds changed according to the weather. It is surprising with what distinctness noises are wafted, even in the very bowels of the earth. When seated, in their intervals of leisure, on the rocks they had just hewn asunder, these lonely men could distinctly hear the murmur of the waves, a few fathoms only above them, and their quick dash on the cliffs. On the face of these lofty cliffs some of the workings were carried, by which the ore was borne above, and

the weight was seen moving in mid air over the dizzy rocks, even when the tempest was wildest, for the men were fearless and enterprising ; but the immediate scene of the tale lies a little remoter from the beach, and farther up the vale. The desert valley where Sindbad found his diamonds was not more unsightly than this place. Nature was all withered up ; the blackened piles that lay around were as cheerless as so many tombs—not the tombs where the wild flower and the grass have gathered, but like those of the suicide, cursed and forsaken. Crowds of human beings, from the child to the old man, were busily toiling here ; the voices that rung around, and were echoed by the caverns in the rocks, were gay and loud ; and many a song was sung, for dearly they loved their work. There was something fascinating, no doubt, to all their minds in this wild and bold pursuit of riches ; for miners prefer infinitely to hold the smallest share in the fruits of their discoveries, rather than accept the highest regular wages. I have seen the common men stand and point to the heaps thickening around them, with as much pride and triumph as a soldier would display pointing to the field of his victory ; then, folding his hands on his breast, the miner would gaze on the scene in silence, and calculate fondly the probable gains, while his little home, filled with added comforts and luxuries, his wife and children handsomely attired, rose before his eyes : it was a beautiful speculation !

In the month of August, one of the chief directors of this mine of Poldice, by name Captain William Nicholas, went under ground, in his accustomed duty, to see how the work advanced, and view the several pitches or tracts of earth that were then being excavated. He had been to the bottom levels, and was on his way up, when he called at one of the pitches

that was worked by two men: it was the last he had to enter, and was at the depth of about twenty-three fathoms from the surface.

There is generally in a mine, as in a ship's crew, one man, at least, more noted for his wit and intelligence than his comrades, and a kind of oracle among them. Pascoe, one of the two, was an old man, and celebrated for his almost inexhaustible fund of stories, and jokes, and conversation. His earlier life had been passed at sea, and he had wandered to many parts of the world, and his memory retained most that he had seen. Their habits of life, that often place these miners in lonely groups in the bowels of the earth during the whole day or night, of necessity make them social and communicative. Pascoe was a treasure to these men, and glad was the party who could get him among them.

The battle of Salamanca had just been fought, and Captain Nicholas was very desirous, ere he ascended, to have some talk with the old man, for he had been in Spain. Fate does not leave its victim sometimes without kindly whisperings, that, if obeyed, would save. More than once he felt a strange reluctance to stop, and again mounted the ladder to go to his home, where his wife, whom he tenderly loved, was expecting him. But curiosity prevailed, and he turned aside towards the spot, which he soon after entered, where the two miners were now eating their repast and conversing; he stuck his candle against the wall, and sat down beside the old man. He bade the other go above ground: he was a young man, the son of Pascoe; and he said afterwards, that, as he was leaving the spot at his captain's bidding, Nicholas turned to him with a singular smile, and observed he did not know what was come over him, but believed that his dream the night before had brought a gloom upon his

mind ; that he thought he was buried in a vast tomb in the middle of the earth, and the waves were rushing all around him, and his lonely candle that he held in his hand never went out. The miners are a very superstitious people, and often have omens and warnings of their fatal mischances. He had been married but one year to a young and handsome woman, and was himself in the prime of life, being much esteemed for the gentleness and kindness of his manners, and his skill in the conduct of the mine. His dwelling was on the side of the hill that fell abruptly into this wild valley : in spite of the sea winds and the soil, he had raised a sweet little garden in front, and from his windows could overlook every part of the busy scene beneath. Here she was often seated, watching for his coming — for the moment when he rose out of the shaft, with his candle flickering in his hand at the sudden gleam of day, his large flannel garments dripping with water, and his face pallid with the damps of the region below.

Their attachment was of many years' duration, and was hopeless till he received this appointment ; and then they repaired joyful to their lonely dwelling, to which the stranger's foot seldom came. A chance relative, or a friend, at long intervals, would call and taste of their hospitality, and look wistfully on the waste scene around ; he did not envy them. The vale had few exciting sights or sounds, save that, in the dead of winter, — for it was a dangerous shore, — the signal gun was fired, and the alarm lights hoisted, of some vessel driving on the cliffs ; and they could hear the shrieks of despair, and see the wreck drifting, not far from their walls. But for the excitement of his profession, and its strong contrasts, the mind of Nicholas might have wearied also of the scene ; but no Arab of the desert felt keener joy, as the lonely

palm and the fountain met his eye afar off, than Nicholas did, in the midst of his gloomy toils, as the hour of his ascent to his beloved home approached. And when he sat there beside the fire, and his wife was nigh, and bent over him with warm kisses and endearing words, and evening was closing on the bleak cliffs, and on the restless deep, that fell with a hollow sound on the beach — he felt that he was happy, inexpressibly happy. Such a moment was never more to come to the doomed man!

In the mean time, he was still seated far beneath, by the side of Pascoe, conversing earnestly, when they suddenly heard a rumbling noise, as if the ground was giving way near them. There was an instant pause in the old man's talk; they looked wildly round for a moment on the gloomy sides of the cavern that enclosed them, and then on each other. The noise was like distant thunder, or the moan of the rising tempest; it lasted but a few moments, and then died utterly away. "It is only the men working on the opposite side of the shaft," said the old man, after listening intensely: his companion seemed of the same opinion, and they resumed their discourse with the same ardor. The mine, in the centre of which they were seated, is one of the oldest in Cornwall, and was worked some hundred years since. It happened that the noise they heard, instead of arising from the men working opposite, was occasioned by the ground beginning to run in at a level about ten fathoms under them; there was an ancient shaft of the former mine, unknown to any one, that yawned like a gulf to receive them. The sound rose suddenly again, with a quick trembling of the earth on which they were seated: strongly alarmed, they sprang to their feet, but all too late. The noise was incessant and awful; they saw the roof and the sides of the cav-

ern tremble on every side, as if by an earthquake. In all the horror which men feel for the last few moments which precede inevitable death, they ran to and fro, calling wildly for aid: no human power could save them in that hour. The earth, that had given way slowly on every side beneath, now sank at once, and the whole extent, often fathoms deep, between the mouth of the ancient shaft and the spot where they had sat, glided down with the swiftness of an avalanche, bearing the unhappy men with it, while their candles, stuck in the wall above, still gave their light, as if in mockery. The abyss into which they fell was fifty fathoms deep, and half full of water: there was a faint struggle for life, a dying cry; the old man's voice rose louder than that of his companion — and then all was silence.

The son of the former, who was bade to go above ground by his captain, lingered in the ascent: it was by his means that the event was first known: he was, at the moment of his parent's ingulfment, climbing slowly, and turning aside from time to time in search of discoveries, about fifty feet above the place where he left his father and Nicholas seated. After the noise, the cause of which he could not divine, had subsided, he called out loudly to know if all was right; but was rather offended that he could not get them to answer him, as he could see their candles sticking fast to the walls underneath, and thought that his father and Williams were still seated beside them. He continued to pass over the brink of a tremendous precipice, not aware at first of his danger; but, still receiving no answer to his calls, he scrambled nearer, and the dim horror of the scene was then opened to him: the two solitary lights cast their glare on that sudden grave; he could see but a small part of its depth: all below was the "blackness of dark-



ness," up which came at intervals a sullen splash, caused by the falling of fragments of rock or stones into the water. Once he thought he heard a voice calling for mercy, and that it was his father's: he staid not long to look there, but ascended fast to the summit, and shouted for succor.

The wife of Captain Nicholas was anxiously waiting his coming; the dinner hour, a very early one in these scenes, was past: she thought some unexpected occurrence or discovery had detained him; but as the time passed on, she stood at the window, whence every object in the mine was distinctly visible; suddenly she saw a man appear at the mouth of the shaft, with gestures of despair, and he cried with a loud and bitter cry; then there was a rushing of the people to the spot. And she, too, rushed from her dwelling, and descended the hill without a pause, and mingled with the crowd: their looks were all turned upon her, and she saw there was anguish in them. But no one told her the cause of it; on the contrary, they said a part of the ground had merely fallen in, and obstructed the ascent of her husband, and that they would quickly extricate him. It is easy to command our words, but untutored men cannot shroud the strong emotions of the heart; and in the gloomy and pitying eyes of the stern miners around her, the widow saw that all was over.

"My father—my father!" said the young man, wildly; "will you not save him?—you loved him in life—will you not rescue the old man?"

Then a wild shriek passed over the crowd, and the words of the youth were hushed, and the men, and even the children, turned from him to the wife; for all felt that the love of woman was more commanding than that of a son. She bent over the fatal gulf and shuddered—"My husband!—is *that* your grave?"

Then a sudden movement rose among the people, and they said one to another that all should be done that men could do for their captain; and seizing their heavy tools, they hastened under ground, by different ways, to the scene of death. And she stood at the mouth listening: each sound of the heavy pile, as it struck, and then the rolling away of the earth and stones, came up the gulf faintly, yet horribly.

"O, harm him not!" she said; "for God's sake, do not let the stones fall upon him! Can you see him?—can he move his hand?—take the black earth from his face, that he may breathe."

It had been mercy had they found the body; but this last consolation was denied: they tried all that day, and the following day, but the unhappy men might as well have sunk in the heart of the ocean; it was not that the earth closed over and entombed them; but the water into which they fell was believed to have consumed them quickly, even like fire, such was the strong property of the mineral with which it was impregnated: the mundic water they called it. For experiment, they tied a piece of meat to a string, and throwing it down into the water, it was in a few days totally eaten away: then they were persuaded that the bodies also were consumed.

Soon after this, the working of the lower parts of the mine was suspended; a partial decay fell on the concern; many of the people sought other scenes of toil and speculation. The aspect of the valley was no longer the same. The cliffs rose as sublimely, and the sweep of ocean beyond was as glorious; but fortune dwelt no longer there.

The widow lived alone for some time in the desolate dwelling, the only good one in the region; the others were only cottages of the miners or fishermen. Beneath the bold precipices the boats were moored

during the day, and at eve they pushed to sea with the wind off shore. The widow, still young and handsome, refused to forsake her husband's home. The garden went to decay, like the once busy scene beneath. It was observed that she always shunned to walk near the fatal place, but chose the summits of the cliffs; and would sit there for hours, looking at the vessels in full sail, or at the fishermen on the sands beneath, pursuing their toil. It so happened that, after five years, this state of life grew irksome. There came a man in the prime of life, and of some property, who sought her love; and she married him; and they continued in the same dwelling on the hill side. Whether she was happy there, was doubtful. A melancholy look settled on her countenance as well as her heart; and the tenderness of this second husband, who was strongly attached to her, could not dispel it.

Ten or eleven years after the fatal occurrence, it was determined to again work the mine to its full extent. Many of the old miners came eagerly back to the vale; for the red stream, the decayed heaps, the sea-beat cliffs, were dear to their eyes. With great and prolonged efforts the water of the deep shaft was drawn away; for they sought to pursue their discoveries in that direction. The body of the old man was found first; and at last, standing in an upright posture, even as it fell, that of the unfortunate Nicholas was discovered. But instead of being dissolved, it was in a perfect state of preservation; the hand of corruption was not on it; the strange property of the water had congealed and preserved it. The limbs, the features, the clothes — all were there. The attitude was not that of a man who had died in horror. They looked on in astonishment for some time, and then bore it to the surface. The men gathered

strangely round the form of their ancient captain, and after consulting briefly, resolved to bear it to his widow's dwelling. When they drew nigh, the people came in such numbers around that it was difficult to pass through them.

The second husband and his wife were seated in their parlor, when a confused clamor, that grew louder every moment, approached their door; and at last they heard the voices of many people in pity, in wonder, and fear. But ere they could know the cause, the door opened, and the miners entered, and laid the dead husband at the feet of the living one. The wife looked wildly for a moment into the face of the latter, and then knelt beside the body. Those who witnessed it said it was an awful thing to see her dabbling with the hair and fingers, and kissing the cheek and lips of the dead, who had been the prey of the grave for twelve years. The love of woman has been called by a great writer "a fearful thing;" here it was a glorious and indelible thing, that could thus laugh the king of terrors to scorn, and gain the victory over him. The living husband did not think so; he sat in gloomy silence; he dared not speak his feelings, that second husband; but he could not bear this outpouring of tenderness—this bursting forth anew of affection, that he had thought buried in the tomb. Perhaps no man could support unmoved the sight of his wife's kisses lavished on the former husband of her bosom, and her tears falling in torrents on his cheeks, and her moans, coming from a heart tried almost more than it could bear; for he had been the love of her youth—a handsome, a gentle, a generous being: such was not the partner of her life.

"William, my own William," she said, clasping his nerveless hand almost in frenzy in her own; "sent

to me back again thus! God has sent you back — in mercy! O, in mercy!”

The husband could endure no longer, and strove to lead her away; but she passionately refused, saying that they had been parted twelve years — that the grave had been made to forsake its prey, and should *she* forsake it? And then she spoke wildly and hurriedly, as if addressing him — that his aged mother had died of grief — that their infant child, that she had borne after his loss — then she rose suddenly, and rushed from the apartment. The friends and relatives, and the rest of the people who had looked on in strange surprise, and even horror, strove to prevent her design, and entreated her not to persist in it. But the mother was awake; and neither bars, nor bolts, nor armed men, could withstand her power in this moment. She drew with her into the chamber her only child, a girl of nearly ten years of age, and pointing to the body, made her kneel beside it, and said it was her father! The child shrieked and drew back, and refused to put its hand into the cold one of the dead, or to press her lips to his. The second husband was the only father she ever knew, and what was the lost to *her*? Nothing but a fearful and ghastly object, she would not love it, or embrace it, she said. But “the worms were not around it;” he could not say to them, “Thou art my mother and my sister.” What a world of meaning is in this! We cannot know, perhaps, for we have never been tried, with what fondness, what ardor, we should hang over them we have loved and lost, if decay never came there; would the husband turn away from the wife of his youth, if the parting smile and look still slept on her face, and the beauty of that face fell not, and knew no change? Would the mother not lie down beside her lost one, and press the cold



but imperishable form to her breast, as if life and joy could wake there again? So felt, no doubt, the tried and agonized woman. "Just as he fell! — O God! just as he fell!" — she murmured, as her thoughts fell back to the vale by the sea, where they had lived so happily, till the morn when he dreamed of death ere it came, and took a sad and kind farewell of her, as if a foreboding even then was on his mind.

And now the husband sterily interposed, and said that he would endure no longer; that for years he had striven to soothe her mind and chase away the gloomy remembrances of her loss, and the dreadful manner of it; and now the wound was opened afresh, and would never close, and the kindness of the living would be lost, in the woman's heart, in the love of the dead. They looked on him, and saw that his mind was greatly troubled, and that his passions were roused. Strange that jealousy of the dead should thus enter the mind of the living!

He stooped and spoke some words to her as she knelt, that were not heard by those around: they seemed to move her strongly for the moment, for she looked wistfully in his face, the expression of which was sad and menacing: then she rose slowly, took her child by the hand, and left the apartment. Her relatives saw there was no time to be lost; that to leave the unperished form of her first husband beneath her roof would only sow dissension and useless sorrow; that it could not and must not be. What had he to do in this breathing and busy world? Why was he thus cast forth, after his time, when the wife could not claim, and the child would not own him? With all care and reverence, they removed the body to an upper chamber, where the same attentions and duties were given as if he had been newly slain; but no mourners came; no one wept over him: he was so



long lost as to be almost forgotten: to the second husband he had ever been a stranger. The latter, after the form was removed from his sight, as well as the misery of his wife, behaved well and calmly. After a time he spoke, in words suited to the sad occasion, to those around, and said that the remains should be treated with as much honor as if they were those of his brother. There was another trial of his temper: the wife insisted that the body should be laid in their own bed—it was the same in which she had slept with her first husband; the head rested on the same pillow. It was night when it was placed there, for many hours had now passed. He came and stood beside it a few moments in silence, but showed no emotion; her hands had strewed flowers around it, and placed lights at the head and feet; but nothing could ever induce him to sleep in that bed again.

On the third day after this, Nicholas was borne to the grave, followed by his wife and child, and a great concourse of people. Andrews also followed, but not as a mourner. The deceased was buried in the parish churchyard that stood solitary on the summit of a hill at no great distance: the great tower could be seen far off at sea, and often served the mariners as a landmark. Three years after this, Andrews died also, and was buried in the same spot, but not in the same grave. The widow was again left desolate. This desolation was, however, less bitter than the first: she no more gave way to useless repinings; the dwelling on the hill side that overlooked the mine was no longer that of despair; the garden was kept carefully neat, for Nicholas had loved it, and trimmed it every day with his own hand, when he ascended from the depths of the mine, and his daily toil was over. The care of her child was a sweet and endless office; and now she could tell of her father; of his strange end

and stranger restoration ; how fond, how kind a man he had been ; how suddenly he was taken away ; and how God had restored him, but for a few moments only, to comfort her ; and she wept bitterly on the neck of his first-born, and the child wept also. The stern eye of the second husband was no more upon them ; he slept in peace ; and to his grave the widow sometimes repaired — to the burial-ground on the hill — at evening, but not to *his grave* — at least the neighbors said so. There was another beside it, planted with flowers, and a handsome tablet over it. The children of the hamlet, who sometimes played wildly in the cemetery, and chased each other over the fresh as well as the neglected graves, never dared to tread on *his* ; they remembered his strange finding, and they looked on it with awe. She knelt there, and the child knelt beside her ; her little hands were taught to pluck every stray weed away ; and she gazed in silence and love on her mother, as she prayed, with clasped hands and tears fast falling. The prayer was too deep and heartfelt for words ; but the moving of the lip, the heaving of the breast, the eager, agonizing expression of the eye, appeared as if a strange and wild hope mingled with her petition to Heaven. To the stranger's eye she seemed to say, "Is corruption yet on thee, my husband ? Wilt thou again burst the ceremonies of the grave ? Ten years he lay undecayed ! — Surely, surely, the worm is not on thee !"

She had many offers, even after this, to marry again. She was not yet more than thirty, and sorrow had not quite wasted her comeliness ; but she never would listen to them, and continued to reside in the lonely dwelling on the hill side, looked upon by all as a woman with whom Heaven had dealt strangely, yet mercifully. The rude fishermen, who plied their trade near the noble cliffs just beyond, would often

bring to her door their choicest fish, ere they travelled inland to seek a market. The miners, whenever she passed by the scene of their toils, paid her marked respect, and looked curiously on the only child, who, as years passed away, grew to a beautiful yet delicate girl: the women of the hamlet said how like she was to her father, yet that no good would come to her, born in such a way, and under so dark a doom.

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## THE PEASANT GIRL'S LOVE.

THE county assizes had commenced in my native town, when a new batch of Irish tithe arrangers were brought in prisoners by a strong party of police. They had attacked, the previous evening, a gentleman's house, for the purpose of rifling it of arms; had been repulsed by the police, who, aware of their intentions, lay in ambush for them; and lives were lost on both sides. I was idling on one of the bridges, when they passed by the jail, bound with ropes and buckles to the common cars of the country. Some of them were wounded, too—the brow, or hand, or clothing, giving vivid evidence of the fact.

But, although the general impression made by the whole of the wretched group was painful, one face among them strongly interested me. It was that of a young man, not more than nineteen or twenty; his features were comely, and, I would have it, full of goodness and gentleness. His clear blue eye, too, was neither sulky, nor savage, nor reckless; but seemed to express great awe of his situation, unless when from sudden mental recurrence to home, it

quailed or became suffused with tears. I involuntarily followed the melancholy procession towards the jail, thinking of that young man. After all the prisoners had been ushered into their new abode, a popular anti-tithe attorney, whom I knew, accosted me. He was always ready to conduct, gratis, the defences of poor wretches thus situated; and he told me his intention of going into the jail, that moment, to try and collect materials for saving the lives of some, at least, of the new comers. I expressed a wish to assist him in his task; he readily consented, observing that, as the unfortunate men would certainly be put on their trials the next day, no offer of aid, in their favor, was to be disregarded: so we entered the jail together.

It fell to my lot to visit the cell, among others, of the young man who had so much interested me. His assertions, supported, or, at any rate, not contradicted, by most of his band, seemed to argue that I had not formed a wrong opinion of his character—nay, better still, that there was a good chance of snatching him from the gallows, even though he must leave his native land forever. He had been forced, he said, to accompany the others upon their fatal sortie—had never been “out” before—and had not pulled a trigger or raised a hand against the police: his more guilty associates supported, or else did not contravene, his statement. So, confident that the police would also bear him out at the really critical moment, I took notes of his defence for my friend the attorney, and passed on to the other cells; but of the results of my investigation I will not now speak.

The sagacious attorney was right. By twelve o'clock next day, four of the men, including my favorite client, were placed at the bar of their country: three others were too ill of their wounds to be at

present produced. All was soon over — and over to my affliction, and almost consternation. Instead of swearing that the young man had been comparatively forbearing during the battle outside the gentleman's house, the police, one and all, from strange mistake — for surely they thought they were in the right — distinctly deposed that his was the hand which slew one of their force, and badly wounded another. In vain did he protest, with the energy of a young man pleading for life and all its array of happy promise, against their evidence; in vain did his fellow-prisoners support him; he and they were found guilty in common. But his fate was the terrific one — of him the example was to be made; and while the other men were only sentenced to transportation for life, he was doomed to be hanged by the neck within forty-eight hours, and his body given for dissection.

As the judge ushered in the last words of his sentence, a shriek — (I shall never forget it) — a woman's shriek — and a young woman's too — pierced up the roof of the silent court-house, and then I heard a heavy fall! The young culprit had been trembling and swaying from side to side, during the sentence: at the soul-thrilling sound, he started into upright and perfect energy; his hands, which had grasped the bar of the dock, were clapped together with a loud noise; the blood mounted to his very forehead; his lips parted widely, and, having shouted, "Moya! it's she! I knew she would be here!" — he suddenly made a spring to clear the back of the dock. Obviously no desire to escape dictated the action: he wanted to raise Moya — his betrothed Moya — from the floor of the court-house, and clasp her in his arms — and that was all. And, doubtless, in his vigorous and thrice-nerved strength, he would have succeeded in his wild attempt, but that the sleeve of one



arm and one of his hands got impaled on the sharp iron spikes which surmounted the formidable barrier before him. Thus cruelly impeded, however, he was easily secured, and instantly led down, through a trap door in the bottom of the dock, to his "condemned cell," continuing, till his voice was lost in the depths beneath us, to call out, "Moya, cuishlamachree, Moya!"

I hastened, with many others, into the body of the court, and there learned, from her, from her father and mother, and other friends, the connection between her and the sentenced lad. They were to have been married at Easter. This did not lessen my interest in him. My attorney joined me, and we spoke of all possible efforts to obtain a commutation of his sentence, after Moya's parents had forced her out of the court-house, on the way to their home, rejecting all her entreaties to be led into the jail, and — married.

We thought of hearing what the wounded police man might say. But he was fourteen miles distant, where the affray had occurred; and even though his evidence might be favorable, we knew we must be prepared to forward it to Dublin, as the judge would leave our town that day. We set to work, however, mounted two good horses, and within three hours learned from the lips of the wounded man that the Rockite who had fired at him was an elderly and ill-favored fellow. It was our next business to convey our new evidence into town: we did so, in a carriage borrowed from the person whose house had been attacked. He was confronted with all the prisoners. We cautioned him to say nothing that might give a false hope to the object of our interest; but, after leaving the cell, he persisted in exculpating him from having either killed his comrade or wounded himself,



and, moreover, pointed out the real culprit among those who had not yet been put on their trial.

This was a good beginning. An affidavit was soon prepared, which the policeman signed. A few minutes afterwards the attorney started for Dublin, as fast as four horses could gallop. Ten hours, out of the forty-eight allowed to the condemned to prepare for death, had already elapsed. Our good attorney must now do the best he could within thirty-seven hours—it was fearful not to leave an hour to spare—to calculate time when it would just be merging into eternity. But we had good hopes. If horses did not fail on the road, going nor returning, and if the judge, and, after him, the lord lieutenant, could be rapidly approached, it was a thing to be done. That *if*, however!—I scarce slept a wink through the night. Next morning early, I called on the clergyman whose sad duty it was to visit the poor lad in his condemned cell: he and I had been school-fellows, and he was a young man of most amiable character. He told me “his poor penitent” was not unfit to die, nor did he dread the fate before him, notwithstanding his utter anguish of heart at so sudden and terrible a parting from his young mistress. I communicated the hopes we had, and asked the clergyman’s opinion as to the propriety of alleviating the lad’s agony by a slight impartation of them. My reverend young friend would not hear of such a thing: his conscience did not permit him. It was his duty, he said, his sacred duty, to allow nothing to distract the mind and heart of his penitent from resignation to his lot; and should he give him a hope of life, and then see that hope dashed, he would have helped to kill a human soul, not to save one. I gave up the point, and endeavored to seek occupations and amusements to turn my thoughts from the one subject which

absorbed and fevered them. But in vain; and when night came, I had less sleep than on the first.

Early on the second morning, I took a walk into the country, along the Dublin road, vaguely hoping to meet, even so early, our zealous attorney returning to us, with a white handkerchief streaming from the window of his post chaise: that idea had got into my head, like a picture, and would recur every moment. I met him not. I lingered on the road. I heard our town clock pealing twelve — the boy had but an hour to live: I looked towards the county jail, whither he had been removed for execution — the black flag was waving over its drop-door. Glancing once more along the Dublin road, I ran as fast as I could towards the jail. Arrived at the iron gate of its outer yard, I was scarce conscious of the multitude who sat on a height confronting it, — all was hushed and silent, — or of the very strong guard of soldiers at the gate, till one of them refused me way. I bribed the sergeant to convey my name to the governor of the prison, and was admitted, first into the outer-yard, then by the guard-room door, and along a colonnade of pillars, connected with iron work at either hand, into the inner courts of the jail. The guard-room was under the execution-room, and both formed a building in themselves, separated from the main pile; the colonnade, of which I have spoken, leading from one to the other. What had sent me where I now found myself, was an impulse to beseech the sheriff (whom I knew, and who was necessarily in the jail to accompany the condemned to the door of the execution-room) for some short postponement of the fatal moment. He came out to me, in one of the courts at either side of the colonnade; we spoke in whispers, as the good and kind-hearted governor had done — though there was not a creature to overhear us, in the deserted and

sunny spaces all around. I knew the sheriff would at his peril make any change in the hour; but I told him our case, and his eyes brightened with zeal and benevolence, while he put back his watch three quarters of an hour, and asseverated, with my uncle Toby's oath, I believe, that he would swear it was right, and that all their clocks were wrong, and, "let them hang himself for his mistake."

Our point arranged, we sunk into silence. It was impossible to go on talking, even in our conscious whispers. One o'clock soon struck! The governor, pale and agitated, appeared making a sad signal to the sheriff. We beckoned him over to us, and he was shown the infallible watch, and retired again without a word. My friend and I continued standing side by side in resumed silence. And all was silence around us too, save some few most melancholy, most appalling sounds; one caused by the step of a sentinel under the window of the condemned cell, at an unseen side of the prison; another by the audible murmurings of the condemned and his priest, heard through that window — both growing more fervent in prayer since the jail clock had pealed one; and a third was made by some person, also unseen, striking a single stroke with a wooden mallet, about every half minute, upon a muffled bell, at the top of the prison. Yes — I can recall two other sounds which irritated me greatly; the chirping of sparrows in the sun, — and I thought their usual pert note was now strangely sad, — and the tick, tick, of the sheriff's watch, which I heard distinctly in his fob. The minutes flew. I felt pained in the throat — burning with thirst — and losing my presence of mind. The governor appeared again. My friend entered the prison with him. I remained also confused and agonized. In a few minutes, the governor came out,

bareheaded, and tears on his cheeks. The clergyman and his penitent followed; the former had passed an arm through one of the manacled ones of the latter, and the hands of both were clasped, and both were praying audibly. — My old school-fellow wept like a child. My poor client had passed the threshold into the colonnade, with a firm step, his knees kept peculiarly stiff, as he paced along, and his cheeks and forehead were scarlet, while his eye widened and beamed, and was fixed on the steps going up to the execution-room straight on before him. He did not yet see me gazing at him. As the sheriff appeared behind, and his priest, also bareheaded, I rapidly snatched my hat from my head. The action attracted his attention — our glances met — and O! how the flush instantly forsook his forehead and his cheek — and how his eyes closed — while cold perspiration burst out on his brow, and he started, stopped, and faltered! Did he recognize me as the person who had spoken kindly to him in his cell, before his trial, and perhaps, with all my precaution, given him a vague hope? or was it that the unexpected appearance of a human creature, staring at him in utter commiseration, in that otherwise lonely courtyard, had touched the chord of human associations, and called him back to earth, out of his enthusiastic vision of heaven? I knew not; I cannot even guess; *who* can? As he faltered, the young priest passed his arm round his body, and gently urged him to his knees, and knelt with him, kissing his cheeks, his lips pressing his hands, and in tender whispers manning him again for facing shame, and death, and eternity. The governor, the sheriff, and I, instinctively assumed the attitude of prayer at the same moment. Moya's "own boy" never even mounted the steps of the execution-room. We were first startled, while we all knelt, as it afterwards

proved — by her shrieks at the outer gates ; she had escaped from the restraints of her family, and had come to the jail, insisting on being married to him “ with the rope itself round his neck, to live a widow for him forever ; ” and next there was a glorious shout from the multitude on the rural heights before the prison, and my one ceaseless idea of our attorney, with a white handkerchief streaming through the window of his post chaise, *was* realized, though every one saw it but I. And Moya, self-transported for life, went to Van Diemen’s Land, some weeks afterwards, a happy and contented wife, her family having yielded to her wishes at the instance of more advocates than herself, and put some money in her purse also.

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## THE TWO KATES.

“ I CANNOT help observing, Mr. Seymour, that I think it exceedingly strange in you to interfere with the marriage of my daughter : marry your sons, sir, as you please — but my daughter ! that is quite another matter.”

And Mrs. Seymour, a stately, sedate matron, of the high-heel and hoop school, drew herself up to her full height, which (without the heels) was five foot seven, and fanning herself with a huge green fan, more rapidly than she had done for many months, looked askance upon her husband, a pale, delicate man, who seemed in the last stage of a consumption.

“ A little time, Mary ! ” (good lack ! could such a person as Mrs. Seymour bear so sweet a name ? ) “ a

little time, Mary, and our sons may marry as they list for me; but I have yet to learn why you should have more control over our Kate than I. — Before I quit this painful world, I should like the sweet child to be placed under a suitable protector.”

“ You may well call her child, indeed — little more than sixteen. Forcing the troubles of the world upon her so young ! I have had my share of them, Heaven knows, although I had nearly arrived at the age of discretion before I united my destiny to yours.”

“ So you had, my dear — you were, I think, close upon forty ! ”

It is pretty certain that a woman who numbers thirty without entering “ the blessed state,” had better deliberate whether she is able to take up new ideas, forego “ her own sweet will,” and sink from an independent to a dependent being; but a woman of forty who is guilty of such an absurdity merits the punishment she is sure to receive. And though Mr. Seymour was a kind, amiable, and affectionate man, his lady was far from a happy woman; she had enjoyed more of her own way than generally falls to the lot of her sex, and yet not near so much as she desired or fancied she deserved. If Mr. Seymour would have held his tongue, and done exactly as she wished, it would have been all well; but this course he was not exactly prone to — he having been, at least ten years before his marriage, what is generally termed an old bachelor. Let it not be imagined that Mrs. Seymour was one of your “ shall and will ” ladies — no such thing; she was always talking of “ female duties,” of “ genteel obedience,” of “ amiable docility,” and with her eyes fastened upon a piece of tent-stitch which she had worked in her juvenile days, representing Jacob drinking from Rebecca’s pitcher, she would lecture her husband by the long winter hours, and



the midsummer sunshine, as to the inestimable treasure he possessed in her blessed self.

"Think, Mr. Seymour, if you had married a gad-about; *who* would have watched over *my* children?" (she never by any chance said *our* children.) "I have never been outside the doors (except to church) these four years! If you had married a termagant, how she would have flown at, and abused all your little — did I say *little*? — I might with truth say, your *great* peculiarities. I never interfere, never; I only notice — for your own good — that habit, for instance, of always giving Kate sugar with her strawberries, and placing the tongs to the left instead of the right of the poker — it is very sad!"

"My dear," Mr. Seymour would interrupt, "what does it signify whether the tongs be to the right or left?"

"Bless me, dear sir! you need not fly out so; I was only saying that there are some women in the world who would make that a bone of contention; I never do, much as it annoys me — much as it and other things grieve and worry my health and spirits; I never complain — never. Some men are strangely insensible to their domestic blessings, and do not know how to value earth's greatest treasure — a good wife! but I am dumb; I am content to suffer, to melt away in tears — it is no matter." Then, after a pause to recruit her breath and complainings, she would rush upon another grievance with the abominable whine of an aggrieved and much injured person; a sort of mental and monotonous wailing, which, though nobody minded, annoyed every body within her sphere. Her husband was fast sinking into the grave; her sons had gone from Eton to Cambridge; and, when they were at home, took good care to be continually out of earshot of their mother's lamentations;



the servants changed places so continually, that the door was never twice opened by the same footman; and the only fixture at Seymour Hall, where servants and centuries, at one time, might be almost termed synonymous, was the old, deaf housekeeper, who, luckily for herself, could not hear her mistress's voice. To whom, then, had Mrs. Seymour to look forward, as the future source of her comforts—i. e. of her tormenting? even her daughter Kate—the bonny Kate, the merry Kate, the thing of smiles and tears, who danced under the shadow of the old trees; who sang with the birds; who learned industry from the bees, and cheerfulness from the grasshopper; whose voice told, in its rich, full melody, of young Joy and his laughing train; whose step was as light on the turf as the dew or the sunbeam; whose shadow was blessed as it passed the window of the poor and lowly cottager, heralding the coming of her who comforted her own soul by comforting her fellow-creatures. “How can it be possible,” said every body, “that such a lovely, cheerful, cheering creature can be the child of Mr. and Mrs. Seymour? the father, dear man, kind and gentle, but so odd; the mother!” and then followed a look and a shrug, that told of much disapprobation, and yet not half as much as was most generously bestowed on the melancholy-dealing Mrs. Seymour.

Kate's father well knew that his days were numbered; and he looked forward with no very pleasurable feeling to his daughter's health and happiness being sacrificed at the shrine whereon he had offered up his own. Kate, it is true, as yet had nothing suffered; she managed to hear and laugh at her mother's repinings, without being rendered gloomy thereby, or giving offence to the mournful and discontented parent. She would, in her own natural and unsophis-

ticated manner, lead her forth into the sunshine, sing her the gayest songs, read to her the most cheerful books, and gather for her the freshest flowers; and sometimes even Mrs. Seymour would smile, and be amused, though her heart quickly returned to its bitterness, and her soul to its discontent; but Mr. Seymour knew that this buoyant spirit could not endure forever, and he sought to save the rose of his existence from the canker that had destroyed him. She was earnestly beloved by a brave and intelligent officer, who had already distinguished himself, and who hoped to win fresh laurels wherever his country needed his exertions. It would be difficult to define the sort of feeling with which Kate received his attentions; like all young, very young girls, she thought that affection ought to be kept secret from the world, and that it was a very shocking thing to fall in love; she consequently vowed and declared to every body, that "she had no idea of thinking of Major Cavendish; that she was too young, much too young, to marry; that her mamma said so." She even steeped her little tongue so deeply in love's natural hypocrisy, as to declare, *but only once*, "that she hated Major Cavendish." If he addressed her in company, she was sure to turn away, blush, and chatter most inveterately to her cousin, long Jack Seymour; if he asked her to sing, she had invariably a sore throat; and if he asked her to dance, she had sprained her ankle; it was quite marvellous the quantity of little fibs she invented, whenever Major Cavendish was in the way; and it is probable that the calm, dignified, and gentlemanly soldier would never have declared his preference for the laughter-loving and provoking Kate, but for one of those little episodes which either make or mar the happiness of life.

I must observe that Kate's extreme want of resemblance to either her mournful mother or her pale and gentle father, was not more extraordinary than that Major Cavendish, as we have said, — the calm and dignified Major Cavendish, — at six-and-twenty, should evince so great an affection for the animated and girl-ish creature, whom, four years before his "declaration," he had lectured to, and romped with; but no, *not* romped — Major Cavendish was too dignified to romp, or to flirt either; what shall I call it then? laughed — yes, he certainly *did* laugh — generally after the most approved English fashion, — his lips separated with a manifest desire to unite again as soon as possible, and his teeth, white and even, appeared to great advantage during the exertion. Nobody thought that, though young and handsome, he would think of marriage, "he was so grave;" but on the same principle, I suppose, that the harsh and terrible thunder is the companion of the gay and brilliant lightning, majestic and sober husbands often most desire to have gay and laughing wives. Now for the episode. — Mrs. Seymour had fretted herself to sleep, Mr. Seymour had sunk into his afternoon nap, and Kate stole into her own particular room, to coax something like melody out of a Spanish guitar, the last gift of Major Cavendish: the room told of a change, effected by age and circumstances, on the character of its playful mistress. A very large Dutch baby-house, that had contributed much to her amusement a little time ago, still maintained its station upon its usual pedestal, the little Dutch ladies and gentlemen all in their places, as if they had not been disturbed for some months: on the same table were battledores, shuttlecocks, and skipping-ropes; while the table at the other end was covered with English and Italian books, vases of fresh flowers, music, and

some richly ornamented boxes, containing many implements that ladies use both for work and drawing; respectfully apart stood a reading stand supporting Kate's Bible and prayer-books; and it was pleasant to observe, that no other books rested upon those holy volumes.

The decorated walls would not have suited the present age; and yet they were covered with embroidery, and engravings, and mirrors, and carvings — showing a taste not developed, yet existing in the beautiful girl, whose whole powers were devoted to the conquest of some music which she was practising both with skill and patience. There she sat on a low ottoman, her profile thrown into full relief by the back ground; being a curtain of heavy crimson velvet, that fell in well-defined folds from a golden arrow in the centre of the architrave, — while summer drapery of white muslin shaded the other side — her features hardly defined, yet exhibiting the tracery of beauty, — her lips, rich, full, and separated, as ever and anon they gave forth a low, melodious accompaniment to her thrilling chords. There she sat, practising like a very good girl, — perfectly unconscious that Major Cavendish was standing outside the window listening to his favorite airs played over and over again; and he would have listened much longer — but suddenly she paused, and, looking carefully round, drew from her bosom a small case, containing a little group of flowers painted on ivory, which he had given her, and which, poor fellow! he imagined she cared not for, — because, I suppose, she did not exhibit it in public! How little does mighty and magnificent man know of the workings of a young girl's heart! — Well, she looked at the flowers, and a smile bright and beautiful spread over her face, and a blush rose to her cheek, and

suffused her brow, — and then it paled away, and her eyes filled with tears. What were her heart's imaginings Cavendish could not say; but they had called forth a blush, — a smile, — a tear, — love's sweetest tokens, and, forgetting his concealment, he was seated by her side, just as she thrust the little case under the cushion of her ottoman! — How prettily that blush returned, when Cavendish asked her to sing one of his favorite ballads, — the modest, half-coquettish, half-natural air, with which she said, "I cannot sing, *sir*, — I am so very hoarse." "Indeed Kate! you were not hoarse just now." "How do you know?"

"I have been outside the window for more than half an hour."

The blush deepened into crimson, — bright glowing crimson, — and her eye unconsciously rested on the spot where her treasure was concealed. He placed his hand on the cushion, and smiled most provokingly, saying, as plainly as gesture could say, — "Fair mistress Kate, I know all about it; you need not look so proud, so shy, — you cannot play the impostor any longer!" But poor Kate burst into tears, — she sobbed, and sobbed heavily and heartily too, when her lover removed the case, recounted the songs she had sung, and the feeling with which she had sung them; and she did try *very hard* to get up a story, about "accident" and "wanting to copy the flowers," — with a heap more of little things that were perfectly untrue; and Cavendish knew it, for his eyes were now opened; and after more, far more than the usual repetition of sighs, and smiles, and protestations, and illustrations, little Kate *did* say, or perhaps (for there is ever great uncertainty in these matters) Cavendish said, "that if papa, or mamma, had no objection — she believed, — she thought, —

she even hoped!" and so the matter terminated;—and that very evening she sang to her lover his favorite songs; and her father that night blessed her with so deep, so heartfelt a blessing, that little Kate Seymour saw the moon to bed before her eyes were dry.

How heavily upon some do the shadows of life rest! Those who are born and sheltered on the sunny side of the walk know nothing of them; they live on sunshine! they wake i' the sunshine—nay, they even sleep in sunshine.

Poor Mr. Seymour, having gained his great object, married, in open defiance of his wife's judgment, his pretty Kate to her devoted Cavendish; laid his head upon his pillow one night about a month after, with the sound of his lady's complaining voice ringing its changes from bad to worse in his aching ears,—and awoke, before that night was passed, in another world. Mrs. Seymour had never professed the least possible degree of affection for her husband;—she had never seemed to do so,—never affected it until then. But the truth was, she had started a fresh subject;—her husband's loss, her husband's virtues, nay, her husband's faults, were all new themes; and she was positively charmed, in her own way, at having a fresh cargo of misfortunes freighted for her own especial use: she became animated and eloquent under her troubles; and mingled with her regrets for her "poor dear departed," were innumerable wailings for her daughter's absence.

Kate Cavendish had accompanied her husband, during the short, deceitful peace of Amiens, to Paris; and there the beautiful Mrs. Cavendish was distinguished as a wonder "*si aimable*," — "*si gentille*," — "*si naive*," — "*si mignone*:" — the most accomplished of the French court could not be like her,



for they had forgotten to be natural ; and the novelty and diffidence of the beautiful English woman rendered her an object of universal interest. Petted and feted she certainly was, but not spoiled. She was not insensible to admiration, and yet it was evident to all she preferred the affectionate attention of her husband to the homage of the whole world ; nor was she ever happy but by his side. Suddenly the loud war-whoop echoed throughout Europe,—the First Consul was too ambitious a man to remain at peace with England,—and Major Cavendish had only time to convey his beloved wife to her native country, when he was called upon to join his regiment. Kate Cavendish was no heroine ; she loved her husband with so entire an affection, a love of so yielding, so relying a kind—she leaned her life, her hopes, her very soul upon him, with so perfect a confidence, that to part from him was almost a moral death.

“ How shall I think ? how speak ? how act, when you are not with me ? ” she said ; “ how support myself ? who will instruct me now, in all that is great, and good, and noble ? who will smile when I am right, who reprove me when I err, and yet reprove so gentle that I would rather hear him chide than others praise ! ” It was in vain to talk to her of glory, honor, or distinction—was not her husband in her eyes sufficiently glorious, honorable, and distinguished ; whom did she ever see like him ? she loved him with all the rich, ripe fondness of a young and affectionate heart ; and truly did she think that heart would break, when he departed. Youth little knows what hearts can endure ; they little think what they must of necessity go through in this work-a-day world ; they are ill prepared for the trials and turmoils that await the golden as well as the humbler pageant of existence. After-life tells us how wise

it is that we have no prospect into futurity. Kate Cavendish returned to her mother's house, without the knowledge of the total change that had come over her thoughts and feelings: her heart's youth had passed away, though she was still almost a child in years; and her mother had a new cause for lamentation. Kate was so dull and silent, so changed; the greenhouse might go to wreck and ruin for aught she cared. And she sat a greater number of hours on her father's grave than she spent in her poor mother's chamber. This lament was not without foundation; the beautiful Kate Cavendish had fallen into a morbid and careless melancholy that pervaded all her actions; her very thoughts seemed steeped in sorrow; and it was happy for her that a new excitement for exertion occurred, when, about five months after her husband's departure, she became a mother. Despite Mrs. Seymour's prognostications, the baby lived and prospered, and by its papa's express command was called Kate—an arrangement which very much tended to the increase of its grandmamma's discontent; "It was such a singular mark of disrespect to her not to call it Mary."

How full of the true and beautiful manifestations of maternal affection were the letters of Mrs. Cavendish to her husband! "little Kate was so very like him—her lip, her eye, her smile;" and then, as years passed on, and Major Cavendish had gained a regiment by his bravery, the young mother chronicled her child's wisdom, her wit, her voice, the very tone of her voice was so like her father's! her early love of study—and, during the night watches, in the interval of his long and harassing marches, and his still more desperate engagements, Colonel Cavendish found happiness and consolation in the perusal

of the outpourings of his own Kate's heart and soul. In due time, his second Kate could and did write those misshapen characters of affection, pot-hooks and hangers, wherein parents, but only parents, see the promise of perfection: then came the fair round hand, so *en bon-point*, with its hair and broad strokes; then an epistle in French; and at last a letter in very neat text, bearing the stamp of authenticity in its diction, and realizing the hopes so raised by his wife's declaration, that "their Kate was all heart could desire, so like him in all things." The life of Colonel Cavendish continued for some years at full gallop; days and hours are composed of the same number of seconds, whether passed in the solitude of a cottage or the excitement of a camp; yet how differently are they numbered! how *very*, very different is the retrospect!

Had Colonel Cavendish seen his wife, still in her early beauty, with their daughter half sitting, half kneeling by her side, the one looking younger, the other older than each really was, he would not have believed it possible that the lovely and intelligent girl could be indeed his child, the child of his young Kate. A series of most provoking, most distressing occurrences had prevented his returning even on leave to England; he had been ordered, during a long and painful war, from place to place, and from country to country, until at last he almost began to despair of ever seeing home again. It was not in the nature of his wife's love to change. And it was a beautiful illustration of woman's constancy, the habitual and affectionate manner in which Mrs. Cavendish referred all things to the remembered feelings and opinions of her absent husband. Poor Mrs. Seymour existed on to spite humanity, discontented and complaining—a living scourge to good na-

ture and sympathy, under whatever semblance it appeared,—or, perhaps, for the sake of contrast, to show her daughter's many virtues in more glowing colors. The contrast was painful in the extreme, and no one could avoid feeling for the two Kates, worried as they both were with the unceasing complainings of their wo-working parent. If a month passed without letters arriving from Colonel Cavendish, Mrs. Seymour was sure to tell them “to prepare for the worst,”—and concluded her observations by the enlivening assurance “that she had always been averse to her marriage with a soldier, because she felt assured that, if he went away, he would never return!”

At last, one of the desolating battles that filled England with widows, and caused multitudes of orphans to weep in our highways, sent agony to the heart of the patient and enduring: the fatal return at the head of the column, “*Colonel Cavendish missing*,” was enough; he had escaped so many perils, not merely victorious, but unhurt, that she had in her fondness believed he bore a charmed life; and were her patience, her watchings, her hopes, to be so rewarded? was her child fatherless? and was her heart desolate? Violent was indeed her grief, and fearful her distraction; but it had, like all violent emotion, its reaction; she hoped on, in the very teeth of her despair; she was sure he was not dead—how could he be dead? he that had so often escaped—could it be possible, that at the last he had fallen? Providence, she persisted, was too merciful to permit such a sorrow to rest upon her and her innocent child; and she resolutely resolved not to put on mourning, or display any of the usual tokens of affection, although every one else believed him dead. One of the sergeants of his own regiment had seen him struck to

the earth by a French sabre, and immediately after a troop of cavalry rode over the ground, thus leaving no hopes of his escape; the field of battle in that spot presented the next day a most lamentable spectacle; crushed were those lately full of life, its hopes and expectations; they had saturated the field with their life's blood; the torn standard of England mingled its colors with the standard of France; no trace of the body of Colonel Cavendish was found; but his sword, his rifled purse, and portions of his dress, were picked up by a young officer, Sir Edmund Russell, who had ever evinced towards him the greatest affection and friendship. Russell wrote every particular to Mrs. Cavendish, and said, that, as he was about to return to England in a few weeks, having obtained sick leave, he would bring the purse and sword of his departed friend with him.

Poor Mrs. Cavendish murmured over the word "*departed*;" paled, shook her head, and then looked up into the face of her own Kate, with a smile beaming with hope, which certainly her daughter did not feel. — "He is not dead," she repeated; and in the watches of the night, when in her slumbers she had steeped her pillow with tears, she would start, — repeat, "He is not dead," — then sleep again. There was something beautiful and affecting in the warm and earnest love, the perfect friendship existing between this youthful mother and her daughter; it was so unlike the usual tie between parent and child; and yet it was so well cemented, so devoted, so respectful! The second Kate, at fifteen, was more womanly, more resolute, more calm, more capable of thought, than her mother had been at seven-and-twenty; and it was curious to those who note closely the shades of human character, to observe how, at two-and-thirty, Mrs. Cavendish turned for advice and

consolation to her high-minded daughter, and leaned upon her for support. Even Mrs. Seymour became in a great degree sensible of her superiority, and felt something like shame at complaining, before her granddaughter, of the frivolous matters which constituted the list of her misfortunes. The beauty of Miss Cavendish was like her mind, of a lofty bearing — lofty, not proud. She looked and moved like a young queen; she was a noble girl; and when Sir Edmund Russell saw her first, he thought, — alas! I cannot tell *all* he thought, — but he certainly “fell,” as it is termed, “in love,” and nearly forgot the wounds inflicted in the battle-field, when he acknowledged to himself the deep and everliving passion he felt for the daughter of his dearest friend.

“It is indeed most happy for your mother,” he said to her some days after his arrival at Sydney Hall, — “it is indeed most happy for your mother, that she does not believe what I know to be so true. I think, if she was convinced of your father’s death, she would sink into despair.”

“Falsehood or false impressions,” replied Kate, “sooner or later produce a sort of moral fever, which leaves the patient weakened in body and in mind. I would rather she knew the worst at once; — despair by its own violence works its own cure.”

“Were it you, Miss Cavendish, I should not fear the consequences; but your mother is so soft and gentle in her nature.”

“Sir Edmund, — she *knew* my father — lived with him — worshipped him; the knowledge of his existence was the staff of hers; he was the soul of her fair frame. Behold her now; — how beautiful she looks! — those sunbeams resting on her head, and her chiselled features upturned towards heaven, tracing my father’s portrait in those fleecy clouds, or



amid yonder trees; and do you mark the hectic on her cheek? Could she believe it, I know she would be better: there's not a stroke upon the bell, there's not an echo of a foot-fall in the great avenue, but she thinks it is his. At night she starts, if but a mouse do creep along the wainscot, or a soft breeze disturb the blossoms of the woodbine that press against our window; and then exclaims, 'I thought it was your father!'"

With such converse, and amid the rich and various beauties of a picturesque, rambling old country house, with its attendant green meadows, pure trout stream, and sylvan grottoes, — sometimes with Mrs. Cavendish, sometimes without her, — did Kate and Sir Edmund wander, and philosophize, and fall in love.

One autumn evening, Mrs. Seymour, fixing her eyes upon the old tent-stitch screen, said to her daughter, who had, as usual, been thinking of her husband —

"Has it ever occurred to you, my dear Kate, that there is likely to be another fool in the family? I say nothing. Thanks to your father's will, I have had this old rambling place left upon my hands for my life, which was a sad drawback; — better he had left it to your brother."

"You might have given it up to Alfred, if you had chosen, long ago," said Mrs. Cavendish, who knew well that, despite her grumbling, her mother loved Sydney Hall as the apple of her eye.

"What, and give the world cause to say that I doubted my husband's judgment! — No, — no; I am content to suffer in silence. But do you not perceive that your Kate is making a fool of herself, just as you did, my dear, — falling in love with a soldier, marrying misery, and working disappointment?" More, a great deal more, did the old lady say; but fortunately nobody heard her; for when her daughter

ter perceived that her eyes were safely fixed on the tent-stitch screen, she made her escape, and, as fate would have it, encountered Sir Edmund at the door. In a few minutes he had told her of his love for her beloved Kate; but, though Mrs. Cavendish had freely given her own hand to a soldier, the remembrance of what she had suffered, — of her widowed years, the uncertainty of her present state, anxiety for her child's happiness, a desire, a fear of her future well-being, — all rushed upon her with such confusion, that she became too agitated to reply to his entreaties; and he rushed from the chamber, to give her time to compose herself, and to bring another, whose entreaties would be added to his own. He returned with Kate, pale, but almost as dignified as ever. Mrs. Cavendish clasped her to her bosom.

"You would not leave me, child, — would not thrust your mother from your heart, and place a stranger there?"

"No, — no," she replied; "Kate's heart is large enough for both."

"And do you love him?"

The maiden hid her face upon her mother's bosom; yet, though she blushed, she did not equivocate, but replied, in a low, firm voice, "Mother, I do."

"Sir Edmund," said the mother, still holding her child to her heart, "I have suffered too much to give her to a soldier."

"Mother," whispered Catherine, "yet, for all that you have suffered, for all that you may endure, you would not have aught but that soldier husband, were *you* to *wed* again!"

No other word passed the lips of the young widow; again, again, and again, did she press her child to her bosom; then, placing her fair hand with-

in Sir Edmund's palm, rushed, in an agony of tears, to the solitude of her own chamber.

"Hark! how the bells are ringing!" said Anne Leafy to Jenny Fleming, as they were placing white roses in their stomachers, and snooding their hair with fine satin ribbon. "And saw you ever a brighter morning? — Kate Cavendish will have a blithesome bridal; though I hear that Madam Seymour is very angry, and says no luck will attend this, no more than the last wedding!" The words had hardly passed the young maid's lips, when a bronze countenance pressed itself amid the roses of the little summer-house in which they sat arranging their little finery, and a rough and travel-soiled man inquired, "Of whom speak ye?"

"Save us!" exclaimed Jenny Fleming, who was a trifle pert. "Save us, master! — why, at the wedding at the Hall, to be sure, — Kate Cavendish's wedding, to be sure; she was moped long enough, for certain, and now is going to marry a brave gentleman, Sir Edmund Russell!" The stranger turned from the village girls, who, fearful of being late at the church, set away across the garden of the little inn, leaving the wayfarer in quiet possession, but with no one in the dwelling to attend the guests, except a deaf waiter, who could not hear the "strange gentleman's" questions, and a dumb ostler, who was incapable of replying to them.

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The youthful bride and the young bridegroom stood together at the altar; and a beautiful sight it was to see them on the threshold of a new existence. Mrs. Cavendish might be pardoned for that she wept abundantly, — partly tears of memory, partly of hope, — and the ceremony proceeded to the words, "If

either of you know any impediment," — when there was a rush, a whirl, a commotion outside the porch, and the stranger of the inn rushed forward, exclaiming, "I know an impediment, — she is mine!"

A blessing upon hoping, trusting, enduring woman! A thousand blessings upon those who draw consolation from the deepness of despair! — Wife was right — her husband was not dead — and as Colonel Cavendish pressed his own Kate to his bosom, and gazed upon her face, he said, "I am bewildered! — they told me false, — they said Kate Cavendish was to be married! and —"

"And so she is," interrupted Sir Edmund Russell; "but from your hand only will I receive her: are there not two KATES, my old friend?"

What the noble soldier's feelings were, Heaven knows; — no human voice could express them, no pen write them; — they burst from, and yet were treasured in his heart.

"My child! — that my daughter! — two Kates! — wife and child!" he murmured. Time had galloped with him; and it was long ere he believed that his daughter could be old enough to marry. The villagers from without crowded into the sweet village church, and, moved by the noise, Mrs. Seymour put on her new green spectacles, and stepped forward to where Colonel Cavendish stood trembling between his wife and child; then, looking him earnestly in the face, she said, "After all, it is really you! — Bless me! how ill you look! — I never could bear to make people uncomfortable; but if you do not take great care, you will not live a month!"

"I said he was not dead," repeated his gentle wife; "and I said —" But what does it matter what was said? — Kate the second was married; and that

evening, after Colonel Cavendish had related his hair-breadth 'scapes, and a sad story of imprisonment, again did his wife repeat, "*I said he was not dead!*"

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## COUNT RODOLPH'S HEIR.

THE rich glow of an autumn sun reddened the evening sky when Count Rodolph von Lindensberg flung himself on a couch to rest, after a long day's journey. He had apparently been unsuccessful, for no grisly boar's head with its grinning tusks had been borne homewards by his triumphant followers; yet there was a gleam of proud satisfaction in his eye, and a curl on his lip, such as they wear who bring the news of a victory; and when Leona, his beautiful Italian mistress, offered him a cup of Rhenish wine, he waved it from him, as though his thirst had been already quenched at the purer fountain of the torrents on his native hills.

Leona softly replaced the massy goblet on a table which stood near; she unbuckled from his breast the leathern and velvet belt, to which was suspended his ivory hunting-horn, and on which was traced, in cunning embroidery, the motto, "Thy voice is ever welcome!" She shook the velvet cushion, filled with light eider-down, whereon that beloved head was to repose, and sate down to watch his slumbers, and guard them against interruption. For a while she sang, in a low, modulated voice, the wild airs of the country to which her lover belonged; then the mellower music of Italy stole, as if involuntarily, to

lips which had learned, for Rodolph's sake, to speak a harsher language; and in a little space even that ceased: a tear, shed perhaps for many a dear memory in her own forsaken land, trembled on her long, black eyelashes, till, hastily shaking the gathered drops away, she turned to gaze upon the sleeper. Long she watched and gazed with intense and eager love, her dark eyes dwelling on every feature, as though earth held no parallel to their beauty. Sometimes she looked on the broad, determined brow, and thought of the majesty and inspiration which sate on it as a throne—sometimes the bold and exquisitely chiselled profile fixed her attention, and recalled those early days of affection, when she saw in him the realization of all the dreams Grecian sculptor or painter ever wrought; then the calm, statue-like curve of the lip caught her eye, and she drew the lines, as it were, in her heart a hundred and a hundred times; or her glance would wander, with some stray beam of the evening sun, to those short and shining curls of brown, which seemed nearly auburn in its golden light. And still, as she leaned and gazed, listening all the while to his deep and measured breathing, as though it had been music, she brought to mind some trait of character, some act of frank generosity or daring bravery, some kind deed or gentle word—of the thousand she had treasured up—and dwelt separately on each; smiling to herself as she mused, and feeling as though such thoughts increased a love already approaching to idolatry.

And yet was he she loved only as other men! Nay, not so frank, or brave, or quick, or valiant as some, but one of a hasty temper and proud mind; a violent spirit, and a faint, inconstant heart; wayward,



vain, and weak, save in the common-place courage, that strikes when it is struck, revenges when it is insulted, and shields the feeble from injury.

But who shall blame thee, Leona, or who shall call thy choice unwise? Do we not all daily wonder at others for the insufficiency or unworthiness of the object to whom they devote their hearts? Does not each secretly undervalue and marvel at the choice of his or her neighbor? And wherefore? Because the ideal is so mingled with our love, that we do, as it were, glorify the objects of our affection—we bestow our dreaming love of what *might be* on that which *is*—we love a mortal nature with all the strength of our immortal souls—we desire to embody our dream of affection, and clothe it in clay, that it may be a “help meet for us”—and we strive in vain!

But the spell was strong on Leona's heart as she gazed on her lover's face by the light of the autumn sky. The red sun sank lower and lower, the hills grew purple and dark, the clear moon rose faintly in the twilight, as if impatient to begin her reign—but Leona still sate quiet and motionless; nor let us think the time long, or deem that tedious in the telling, which was to her the last, brief, closing hour of a seven years' happiness.

Count Rodolph moved and murmured in his sleep. Gently, almost imperceptibly she bent, as though afraid to wake him, and yet loath to lose even those few murmured syllables. The smile forsook her lip, the color fled from her cheek as she listened, and a fierce jealousy flashed from her dark, dilated eyes. Again the sleeper uttered those fatal words, and Leona, starting up, exclaimed, “Awake, Rodolph!” “Awake, *traitor!*” she would have added, but the word died on her lips. “Of what wert thou dream-

ing?" asked she, in a choked tone, as her lover's angry glance turned full on her, questioning what had disturbed his slumber.

A change passed over Count Rodolph's face; but he took her hand, and answered, with a forced smile, "Must we remember dreams, when the reality is again present to us?"

Leona drew not away her hand, but it lay in his warm grasp, chill and cold as ice; and her voice sounded hoarse to his ear as she replied, "The reality of thy dream is not present to thee; for in that dream thou didst call upon Adelaide von Ringhen."

"Thou mockest, Leona!"

"*Thou* mockest!" exclaimed the Italian, while her whole frame shook with convulsive passion. "Twice thou didst call on her—twice thy slumbering lips murmured *Adelaide von Ringhen, my beloved bride!*"

"We are not accountable for our dreaming thoughts," muttered Rodolph, in a tone of vexation.

"Then wherefore shrink from avowing them? But it is not so; that which we think of waking, is present to us in sleep; we act and suffer in impossible scenes, perhaps, and in impossible situations—but there is no other change. It were long, Rodolph, before *I* should murmur in my dreams any name but thine; and there *hath* been a time when, if I bent to catch thy slumbering thoughts, the word Leona fell gently on my ear, in the same tone of fondness with which thou hast just pronounced the name of another."

Count Rodolph answered not, but seemed to muse, unconscious of her presence; and when, at length, checking a painful sigh, he turned to speak to her, there was an ominous expression in his countenance, which startled the young Italian. The anger and

jealousy which had possessed her but a moment before, vanished; a fearful terror fell upon her; a bewildering faintness numbed every limb; and, falling at his feet, she stretched out her arms wildly and beseechingly towards him, and exclaimed, "O Rodolph! these seven years my head hath lain on thy bosom — these seven years! Home, mother, country, — I left all to follow thee. Forsake me not! forsake me not!"

"Be patient, beloved Leona; I will never forsake thee; but thou hast demanded an explanation of the words I uttered unwittingly in my sleep; and perhaps destiny so ordered it, that thou shouldst partly guess from those idle sentences what is to be thy fate — and mine. Seat thyself near me, and listen."

Leona obeyed: she neither wept nor changed countenance, while he told of his proud uncle's desire to see him wedded to the wealthy and noble heiress of Ringhen, and of the consequent arrangements made between the two families. She listened calmly, while he confessed how often the boar hunt had been made a pretext for his absence, while, in fact, he was endeavoring to win the heart of the cold and gentle Adelaide; and how, as the certainty of his success became apparent, he imagined various methods of breaking the intelligence to his faithful companion. Once only, as he alluded to his uncle's wish to see an heir to his proud domains, Leona bowed her head still lower, and spoke.

"If my child had lived, then," said she, moodily, "thou wouldst not have cast me off!"

"*Thy* child! alas, Leona!" said her lover, while a smile of regret and bitterness curled his lip; "dost thou vainly imagine *thy* child could have been heir to Lindensberg? No! I would indeed have done a father's part by him, and he should have stood proud-

ly among the best ; but nobler blood must flow in the veins of Count Rodolph's heir."

A wild, searching expression shot into the eyes of the unhappy Italian, as they turned for a moment upon Rodolph ; but he saw it not ; his heart was brooding over the future triumph of presenting his young son to the vassals of Lindensberg.

With equal patience Leona heard all the arrangements for her future comfort ; how she was to be provided for, and in what way she should return to her native land ; but it was the calm of despair. As they parted, after this long explanation, Count Rodolph bent and kissed her cheek ; it was pale and cold as death.

"We part not in anger," murmured he. "I shall never love another as I have loved thee. Dost thou believe me, Leona?"

The young Italian answered not ; a shudder ran through her frame, and a mist was before her eyes. When she again raised them, Count Rodolph had left the apartment.

Leona moved towards the high and narrow arched window ; the moon was risen, and the broad lands of Lindensberg lay stretching far as eye could discern in the white, misty light. She thought of the days of her girlhood—of all her passionate love—her patient tenderness—the tenderness that never dreamed of change. She thought of the vows Rodolph had then uttered, and to which she had listened with the confident credulity of affection : she retraced the scenes where they had wandered together, and the words they had spoken. Her lost mother's reproachful countenance rose distinctly as on the day when her daughter's shame was made known to her ; and, musing on the utter desolateness of her position, should she return to the land where she once had

many friends, Leona wept. Long, long she wept, and wildly and often she clasped her feverish hands, and stretched them to Heaven; but at length the fountain of her tears seemed dried. She rose from the ground, where she had knelt in despair; she smoothed back her tangled, raven hair, and, lifting the veil which had fallen from her shoulders, she turned once more to the window. Dark and terrible was the expression of her pale face as she did so, and the white, quiet moonlight fell on a brow convulsed with agony. "*Thou* art mine enemy; thou who art to inherit hill, and dale, and river," muttered Leona, wildly, as she gazed on the tracts of forest and plain which lay below — "*thou* art mine enemy, heir to Lindensberg."

The morrow of that dark day came. Its morning was fair and bright; and, as Rodolph sprang from his couch, his heart felt lighter than for many weeks, for he had nothing now to dread or to conceal; and Leona had heard him far, far more calmly than he had expected. "I was wrong," said he, as he hastily slung on the hunting-belt embroidered by her hand — "I was wrong in my estimate of a woman's strength of feeling. Perhaps she, too, began to feel the ties irksome which bound us together, and will return to her native land with pleasure. Now to the chase!" and, as he lifted the hunting bugle to his lips, he carelessly uttered the words, to which the young Italian had assigned a double meaning, "*Thy* voice is ever welcome!"

The chase was long and the day sultry; and when, on his return, Count Rodolph came round by the torrent's fall, from whence he could command a view of his own castle, he checked his horse, and wound his bugle three times. As its sweet, mellow tones floated past, and died upon the hill, he said, smiling

slightly to himself, "Now shall I judge of the mood in which I shall find Leona; if she be gentle, she will sound the silver-tipped horn, wherewith I taught her long since playfully to reply to this notice of my approach, and give me welcome; if she be sad and sullen, I shall miss the accustomed answer."

There was a pause, a longer pause than for seven long years had ever been, between the blast of Rodolph's hunting-horn and his welcome home. The fitful autumn wind swept in a sudden gust among the trees which grew on the banks of the torrent, and scattered a shower of yellow, withered leaves past his plumed cap, as he sat, bending forward on his weary, but impatient steed, listening for the signal. In spite of his carelessness and inconstancy, a sudden and stinging melancholy smote on Rodolph's heart; the mocking smile left his lip; twice he lifted his bugle, and twice his pride struggled against the desire to hear an assurance that she he was forsaking loved him in spite of all. At last, that desire conquered; he might not have been heard; the wind was high, although the noon had been oppressively hot. He blew a loud, strong blast, and listened intently, lifting his velvet bonnet from his head. Again there was a pause; and, with a feeling of deep irritation, Rodolph struck the spurs in his horse's side. Rearing at the unexpected correction, the gallant animal sprang forward, trampling the withered boughs and loose stones by the torrent's side; when, just at that moment, faint and mournful, but distinctly clear, the answering signal reached Count Rodolph. Three times it answered his thrice-repeated summons; and there was tenderness as well as triumph in his tone, as he murmured, "Bless thee, Leona!" But the ear of the experienced huntsman told him that it was not from his home that the answering note was sent, but



from a hill to the left, where a ruined castle stood mouldering to decay, untenanted and forsaken, and avoided by the peasantry as the scene of a foul murder done by a son upon his aged father. "She hath been wandering from home, musing over the change in her condition; perhaps weeping for my sake," he thought; and his heart softened towards the fond companion of his youthful years.

That evening was a long and lonely one to Count Rodolph. With his own hot and weary hands he unbuckled the clasps of his hunting-vest, and awkwardly arranged the mantle and pillow, whereon he was accustomed to rest, lulled by the sweet melody of Leona's songs; his thirsty lips drank from a goblet brought by a serving-man; he could not close his tired eyes, but evermore gazed sorrowfully at the embrasure and fretted oak-work of the Gothic window at which they had stood the preceding evening. *They!* He had thought without a sigh of sending Leona from him forever, of uniting his destinies with another; and now he could not bear to spend one evening awaiting her return; he could not bear the fond and foolish reflection that *us*, and *we*, and *ours*, would no longer refer to himself and the young Italian, but to some newer partner, to whom half the joys and sorrows of his life were unknown. He thought he had ceased to love Leona; perhaps he had; but the habit of seven years is strong; he could not imagine to himself a future in which *she* was to be nothing, who had been all the world to him. He shrank from the novelty and strangeness of a life which must, as it were, begin anew; throughout the course of which one haunting sorrow must ever pursue him, which he dared not confide, and in which, unlike the joys and sorrows of the past, he could expect no sympathy.

He closed his eyes, and courted rest in vain. He missed the gentle hand that was wont to lie clasped in his, till his slumbering arm sank nerveless and unconscious by his side. He missed the ringing, warbling notes of her young voice; he missed the deep, watchful tenderness of her gaze, as he remembered it through countless evenings, when his eyelids, heavy with slumber, unclosed for a moment to turn on her a last look of love.

"How shall I live without thee, Leona?" sighed he; "and why dost thou linger out so late, when the evenings are numbered that we may spend together?" And again he gazed towards the window, while dreams of relinquishing the noble alliance proposed to him, and thoughts, less honorable, of concealing Leona in some secure retreat, where he might yet see and visit her, passed through his mind. But still Leona returned not.

And when the next day, and the next, passed on, and all search for the young Italian proved vain, Count Rodolph felt to the core of his remorseless heart that he had underrated the sorrow of the deserted girl, and that she had departed to hide her shame and despair, where none—not even he—might find her.

At length the lonely castle of Lindensberg was again the scene of festivity and rejoicings. The sound of wassail and merriment was heard in the great hall, choral songs were chanted, flowers were strown, and the fair Adelaide Von Ringhen became Count Rodolph's bride. As the bridal procession passed through the long gallery which led from the chapel, a wreath of flowers, flung from above, fell at the Lady Adelaide's feet. Several of the group immediately near the young bride looked up to discover by whose hand the offering was made; but Rodolph's

keen eye alone discerned the shrinking form of Leona retreat behind one of those gigantic stone statues, which, at regular distances, adorned the gallery. The discovery sent a chill to his heart; and it was the space of a minute before he recollected himself sufficiently to pick up the wreath, which he did, and with a forced smile tendered it to the bride. An exclamation burst from her lips; and, as her maidens crowded round, the wreath fell from her hands, while faint, and pale, and trembling, she looked up in her husband's face. He snatched the garland, and examined it more closely: a label, in a well-known hand-writing, dedicated it to "*The Mother of Count Rodolph's Heir*," and he perceived that it was composed of nightshade, yew, and other mournful, sepulchral, or supposed poisonous plants. He commanded it to be removed, and, flinging it from him, passed on as rapidly as the faint and tottering steps of Adelaide would permit; but none of the attendants, uneducated and superstitious as they were, dared to pick up "*The Garland of Death*," and many a fearful look was cast back, by the last loiterers of the procession, to the spot on the stone pavement where it lay.

Uneasy and wretched, yet gratified, in spite of what had occurred, at this proof that Leona had not abandoned Lindensberg, Rodolph burned for the moment when he might escape from the noble company by whom he was surrounded, and speak a few words of explanation with the Italian. Three mortal hours passed away, and the bridal feast had passed untasted either by Adelaide or Rodolph, when the former, complaining of weariness, desired to be conducted to her chamber. Rodolph supported her from the hall, watched her slight form, as, leaning on her favorite maid, she ascended the oaken staircase —

waited till the last of the white-robed attendants passed under the dark arch which led to the apartments of the lady of Lindensberg, and then, with a checked sigh, turned hastily to the chapel gallery. In vain he sought; in vain he even ventured to breathe Leona's name aloud. No sign of life was in that long and dimly-lighted apartment; and he remained standing alone, disheartened and stupefied, gazing on the statues behind which he had perceived Leona in the morning.

He was interrupted by the sound of footsteps, and, looking eagerly forwards, perceived two of the Lady Adelaide's attendants, who, trembling and uncertain, advanced hesitatingly into the apartment.

"What seek ye here?" asked Count Rodolph, sternly, provoked alike at the interruption, and the disappointment it occasioned him.

"We come for the Garland of Death, my lord; the Lady Adelaide desires that it be brought instantly to her chamber."

"Fools!" exclaimed their irritated master, "see ye not the garland hath been borne away by some one of you this morning? Go! return to the Lady Adelaide, and say Count Rodolph will attend her, and chase these foolish fears; bid the minstrels in the outer hall strike up the 'Welcome to Lindensberg,' and desire Caspar—"

What more Count Rodolph intended was lost; for at that moment three faint blasts were heard, and well the master of Lindensberg knew the sound. A cold dew stood on his forehead, his muscular frame shook with an emotion he could not control, and his cheek blanched like that of a woman.

"Begone!" shouted he furiously, as he perceived the attendants observing these signs of agitation; "begone! and tell your mistress I come."

His young bride received him in tears.

"Alas!" said she, "some evil will fall on thy house because of me. The Garland of Death hath disappeared, no one can tell how; for none of my attendants ventured this morning to take it up; and —"

"Hush, my beloved," said Count Rodolph, caressing her; "if that be all, *I* can certify to thee that the garland was given and reclaimed by a living hand."

But, at this moment, a chill doubt stole over the mind of the stout knight himself, remembering the ominous sound of the bugle-horn just at the moment when he desired to hear "Welcome to Lindensberg." Was that indeed the result of accident? or did the spirit of the lost Leona haunt her once happy home? Adelaide gazed on her husband in fear and dread: he saw her not — thought not of her —

"His eyes  
Were with his heart, and that was far away;"

and from that hour, the Garland of Death was a forbidden subject in the castle.

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Time passed heavily with Rodolph. Involuntarily he tormented himself with conjectures as to what had been the fate of Leona; involuntarily he contrasted the cold and gentle manner, the reserved and timid disposition of his wife, with those which had charmed his youth. She feared him; she feared all things; she understood him not; she had not the power to amuse him; and of her affection it might rather be said that she loved no other, than that she was passionately attached to *him*. Her very beauty was that of the snow — fair, cold, and dazzling. The glow of life that animated his lost Leona was wanting.

The chase now became Rodolph's principal delight; and a shade of fierceness, such as comes to those who love only savage pleasures, altered his once frank and even temper. He grew, too, less social; the feast and the wine-cup brought no smile to his lip; he was an altered man. Meanwhile the Lady Adelaide was soon to become a mother, and her haughty relatives, as well as his own, looked forward to the birth of an heir with deep anxiety. As the eventful period approached, Lady Adelaide's terror increased; and though, in obedience to her husband's command, she spoke not her thoughts, yet the Garland of Death was ever present to her mind, and she marvelled whether the strange summons was meant for her, or the little unborn.

Rodolph's absences from home were shortened, and all he could do to cheer her sinking spirits was done; but in vain.

It was exactly a year from the day when Leona had disappeared, that Count Rodolph happened to ride home by the same path which he had pursued on that eventful evening. As he came to the torrent, he checked his horse, and looked sadly round. The evening was still and clear, and the glow of sunlight was rich on the changing foliage of the trees. Oppressed by dispiriting thoughts, Rodolph dismounted from his horse, and flung himself on the brown turf, where he remained idly dreaming of the past, and yet more idly planning for the future. Long years passed in review before him, and he recalled the sensations with which he used to listen for the sound of Leona's ivory hunting-horn. He took off his belt and gazed upon it; he perused and reperused the embroidered words, "Thy voice is ever welcome!" and a stifled sigh escaped him. "How she wor-



shipped me!" was his thought, as he lifted the bugle listlessly, and applied it to his lips. Three slow, mournful blasts he blew, and, flinging himself with his face to the earth, he wept.

Why starts Count Rodolph from his resting-place? Why does his eye glare wildly with a mixture of living hope and superstitious fear? He hears the answering signal float across the hill, mournfully replying to his own. Without a moment's pause, he threw himself on his horse, and galloped towards the ruin of the hill. He saw her—he saw his own Leona! She was seated on the edge of the inner wall of the dried up moat, habited in a black velvet hunting-dress, such as she was wont to wear when she accompanied him to the chase; her eyes were turned towards the distant castle of Lindensberg; they were dim and sunken, and her hair was tangled, and had lost its glossy blackness, apparently by exposure to the elements. One hand supported her head, and the other rested on the ivory bugle which lay by her side. Leona was no longer beautiful; and yet Rodolph felt as though he loved her more than ever. She did not seem to perceive him as he crept towards her; and when, at length, kneeling beside her, he took her hand, and faltered out her name, she gazed around, as if bewildered, and uncertain from whence the sound proceeded. Again he spoke, pressing that cold hand within his own, and sobbing in the agony of his emotion. She turned—she gazed on him; and that glance was present to him till his dying day, for he perceived that she knew him not. Yet was her gaze kind and sorrowful; and, parting his dark hair on his forehead, she murmured,

"Thou weapest! Hast *thou* been forsaken?"

"Leona! O beloved Leona! I am Rodolph, thy unhappy and penitent Rodolph! Where hast thou been, that I have never beheld thee?"

"I've been to Italy," answered she, in a calm, collected voice — "I've been to Italy, to see my poor mother's grave."

The heart of the inconstant lover beat within him, as the even tones fell on his ear. "She recovers; she will know me now," thought he.

"And why lingerest thou in this mournful spot?"

"Knowest thou not?" she answered, turning quickly towards him with a wild smile. "I wait" — and she put her lips close to his ear — "I wait for Count Rodolph's heir."

He shrank away, and rose from her side. Then, gazing at her with bitter sadness, he said, "Collect thy thoughts, Leona, and strive to comprehend me. I am Rodolph: I grieve for thee; rise, and let me conduct thee to the house of one of my vassals, where thou shalt be attended and cared for as though thou wert indeed the lady of Lindensberg. And I will come and see thee, Leona," continued he, passionately; "I will cheer thee, and love thee still. God knows, I love none better!"

There was a pained and perplexed expression on Leona's brow while he spoke, as though she struggled to understand. For a few moments she mused, and then she answered, in a tone of quiet courtesy,

"It is impossible for me, noble stranger, to accompany thee even so far on thy way, or to do thee this service, because I expect Count Rodolph, who returns, even now, from the chase: so farewell, and God speed thee." And she rose and bowed gracefully to her stupefied companion.

"O! if I could but leave thee in safety!" exclaimed he aloud, as he passionately gazed on her

impassive face. And then the method so often resorted to, of humoring partial madness, occurred to him, and he said, "The way is long, and the path is steep, which Count Rodolph hath to tread; he cannot be home so soon. Come with me but a little way."

"Nay, nay," said Leona, shaking her head and smiling, "he is nearer than thou thinkest; he is within sight of Lindensberg; I have heard the signal, and answered it." And she held on high the ivory bugle. "I will watch from the western gallery." So saying, she turned and ran swiftly towards the ruin, and commenced ascending the broken staircase, which led to what had been the principal apartment of the castle; but between the ruins of the staircase (which were of a great height) and the solid building, wherein a dark arch showed the entrance of the ruined hall, there was a space which no mortal could traverse; and as Leona still ascended, and at length neared the summit of the broken steps, Rodolph shaded his eyes, that he might not see her dashed into the distant court below. He tried to call, but his voice was hoarse and whispering with fear. He waited, but the suspense was too terrible; he uncovered his eyes, and looked up; and there, gliding slowly, but securely, across the abyss, he beheld Leona! She disappeared beneath the arch; and, rushing up the ruined stair, crumbling the loose stones downwards as he went, he followed. "There *must* be some frail support, some connection between the steps and the building, which my eye cannot perceive from below," thought he, as he struggled on; but when he stood on the last of that broken flight of steps as on a pinnacle, there was nothing to afford a chance of reaching the arch, and his head grew dizzy as he looked below. Again superstitious thoughts crossed his mind, and one of the songs Leona used to sing to him after his hunting

excursions, seemed to ring in his ear. He turned, and slowly descended, while the gathering shades of evening warned him to lose no time in reaching Lindensberg. As he at length approached the castle, he perceived a confused group waiting to receive him. Caspar, his favorite follower, advanced.

"My lord count," said he, "I am the bearer of evil news. Thy lady liveth, but she hath been sorely terrified; there hath been born an heir to Lindensberg, but already he is no more!"

"What terrified the Lady Adelaide?" asked Rodolph, with forced calmness.

"My lord, you may remember, on the wedding-day, when the attendants of the Lady Adelaide were sent to the gallery of the chapel to search for the Garland of Death,—they found it not, nor hath it ever been explained how it was conveyed away, since none in the castle laid hands on it. But, on that day, my lord, and at the time of their search, three faint blasts of a hunting-bugle were blown, and —"

"Enough," sternly shouted Rodolph; "what hath this to do with to-day's misfortune?"

"My lord, the Lady Adelaide was in grievous pain, and fearing to die before your return, when we heard the welcome sound of your returning signal. But scarcely had a smile passed over her lips at a few congratulating and comforting words spoken by her women, when we heard three blasts, as on that day in the chapel gallery; the women shrieked, and the Lady Adelaide spoke not. Only when the evening closed in, and still you appeared not, she bowed her head and murmured, 'It is for *him*, then; for my good and noble Rodolph, that the signal of death is sent! O! rather for my little one, dear as he is!—rather, far rather, for me!' And as she spoke, the infant gave a wailing cry, and died!"

"Fool! loitering fool, not to come home, instead of seeking the ruined tower," thought Rodolph, as he slowly sought the chamber of his wife. And though in his own secret soul a lingering superstition might be found, he resolved to cheer the Lady Adelaide by telling her the truth, and soliciting her forgiveness.

"This girl, whom I once loved," said he, after he had explained his early history to the shrinking Adelaide, "was in the habit of answering my hunting signal. It was she who, in her jealousy and anger, flung down the garland thou hast deemed of such evil omen; and doubtless, after we had left the chapel, she reclaimed the gift and departed, sounding the bugle from the distant hill, in order to excite regret and pity in my mind. She is a wayward thing — nay, I fear, crazed by her misery; and I have thought it better to tell thee this, because that bugle-horn may sound again; and I would not that thou shouldst be a slave to such terrors."

Adelaide pressed her husband's hand, and sighed deeply. Rodolph spoke again —

"Sigh not for thy little one, but look forward with hope to the future; nor deem the death of so weak a blossom the result of supernatural agency."

"I sigh not for my child," said Adelaide; and she drew her faint hand away, and moaned as though with pain.

\* \* \* \* \*

Perhaps, of all who inhabited the castle, Count Rodolph himself was the most wretched after this explanation. He recalled Leona's words, that "she was *waiting for the heir*;" he shuddered as he remembered her gliding form between the ruined stair and the hall; and it struck him as strange and omi-

nous, that she never answered his signal except when he sounded the horn from that one spot by the torrent's side. At other times he felt that she was indeed his unhappy Leona; and a feverish desire to discover how far this one ray of recollection illumined that benighted mind, oppressed and tortured him. At length a plan suggested itself, which he resolved to adopt. He observed the time which his ride from the torrent to the ruin generally occupied, and desired Caspar to remain by the torrent for that period, and then to sound the hunting-bugle three times, while he himself rode to the hill, and watched the effect on Leona. But the experiment was only attended with fresh bitterness. For a few moments, indeed, the deserted girl seemed to recover her memory and reason: she started up on hearing the signal, and exclaiming, in a tone of joyful tenderness, "Rodolph! dear Rodolph!" returned the expected answer, and smiled to hear the echo float over the hill. But then her countenance fell; tears gathered in her large black eyes, and she moaned and wept, repeating at intervals the single sentence, "Why hast thou forsaken me, beloved?" In vain Rodolph addressed her; she answered him indeed, but it was as a stranger; and he relinquished the painful experiment, satisfying himself with ordering his tenantry in the nearest village to supply the crazed being with all the necessities and comforts of life, and never, on any pretext, to approach the castle—a command which the superstitious fears of the ignorant peasantry rendered superfluous.

Again the Lady Adelaide made Rodolph a father. The babe was strong and beautiful; and, as she watched its growth, the mother of the heir of Lindensberg smiled at her own past fears. The count, too, became passionately fond of his infant son, and the



misery of Leona's situation preyed less constantly on his spirits than heretofore.

The fatal day came, nevertheless, which was to deprive them of this object of mutual tenderness. The German nurse returned not with her charge at the usual hour; and, after days of agonizing suspense and search, the body of the woman was found drowned in the pool beneath the torrent, into which she must have fallen. No trace of the infant could be discovered, except the silken mantle which it had worn; and the dark whirlpool was unsearchable and unfathomable.

It would be vain to attempt describing the effect of this blow on the mother of the lost child. She sank under it, gradually indeed, but securely; and all the superstition of fear returned to her mind. She would not at first believe that it was dead; continually insisting upon seeing the body, and starting at every unusual sound, as though she deemed it the herald of intelligence respecting the fate of her beloved infant. At length a low, nervous fever reduced her to a state of weakness, both of body and mind, which it was painful to see; and Rodolph availed himself of this opportunity, when she could not leave her chamber, to pretend that the body of the young heir had been found, and interred in the chapel. A marble monument was placed there; and, on the recovery of the unhappy Adelaide, she was led to weep over the empty tomb.

But for Rodolph there was not even the melancholy satisfaction of believing his little son interred, where he might from time to time visit him, and indulge his grief. To *him* was ever present the struggle of the helpless woman, and the whelming waters which had closed alike over her and his child: to him was ever present the haunting doubt of Leona's double existence.

Three years rolled away, and Rodolph had never joined his companions in the chase, nor ever sounded the bugle whose eternal answer wrung his heart. Caspar brought, from time to time, the intelligence that Leona came at regular intervals to the scattered village nearest the Hill of the Ruined Tower, for fruit, meal, chestnuts, and other necessities — that she accepted silently what was offered her, and seemed greatly pleased at a present of two goats, which one of the peasants gave her, and which she had since kept in the grass-grown court of the old castle. If questioned, she became restless and suspicious in manner, and sometimes answered with a fierce haughtiness; but, for the most part, she departed when spoken to, and ran swiftly towards the hill, looking back, from time to time, as if fearful of being pursued.

Meanwhile a new misfortune visited Count Rodolph; the Lady Adelaide died, a prey to regret and nervous depression. He mourned for her with sincerity; nor was his sorrow untinged by remorse, when he reflected on the strange circumstances which had shortened her existence. The Lord Ulric of Lindensberg, his uncle, vehemently reproached him for having suffered “that Italian witch” to remain on the territory, lamented the untimely decease of the rich Lady Adelaide, and tormented himself and his nephew with calculations to bring about a second union for Rodolph, with Gertrude von Ringhen, her cousin, who would now inherit. But far other were the schemes of Count Rodolph. To quit Lindensberg, and carry the distracted Leona to her native land, and there, by the most soothing attentions, and the advice of skilful physicians, to restore her to health and to reason; to visit old scenes with her, and endeavor to renew the broken links of memory,

—these were the plans which now formed the day-dreams of the widower.

For this purpose he went daily to the ruined tower, and watched and called, but in vain. Leona appeared not. Burning with anxiety, he at length resolved to await her at one of the huts, the outskirts of the hamlet, where she was wont to come for food; but the moment she perceived him approaching her, she fled precipitately. He pursued and overtook her; when she paused, and turning her pale face full upon him, she said mournfully, "What wouldst thou with me, dark stranger? And wherefore in Rodolph's absence dost thou steal upon me thus?"

"Rodolph is here, and loves thee, and is free, beloved Leona!" murmured the unhappy man, as she again moved onwards. Leona made no reply; and side by side they toiled together up the steep ascent which led immediately to the castle; the slant beams of evening streamed through the broken arches, and gave a vivid and supernatural light and shadow to the mouldering building. "It is the hour he should return," said Leona; "but I hear not the horn." This hint was not lost on Rodolph; and at the same hour on the succeeding evening, having stationed Caspar on the fatal spot which he himself had never revisited, he sought the retreat of Leona. She was tending the two solitary goats in the inner court of the castle, and having fastened them to the root of a larch tree, which had crept through a fissure in the wall, she sate down on a block of stone, apparently faint and fatigued, when the blast of the hunter's horn pealed over the echoing hills. Instantly she started up; a wild expression of pleasure and tenderness overspread her attenuated features; and lifting the ivory bugle to her lips, she exclaimed, "I hear thee Rodolph; I bless thee! I welcome thee!"

Alas! he that was so beloved, even in madness, stood by, unblest, unwelcomed, chilled and agonized, cursing his fate and hers!

He attempted not to converse with her; he attempted not to detain her, as she passed him up the ruined staircase; he gazed not after her. Utterly broken, and bowed in spirit, he hid his face in his hands, and wept. The tears of a man are painful. Rodolph conquered the weakness, and leaning his head back on the broken step above him, and lifting his gaze to the soft evening sky, he indulged in a reverie, as to the possibility of bringing from Rome a physician who had been acquainted with Leona from her childhood, and who, from his knowledge of her constitution, might yet, perhaps, restore her to reason.

So deep was Count Rodolph's reverie, that he perceived not its object stealing down the broken flight of steps, till she had approached the one above that on which his head rested. She stooped; she gazed into his startled eyes; and O! the thrill of hope and expectation that swelled the heart and quickened the pulse of the inconstant lover, when she murmured close to his ear, "Rodolph! it is late, and thou art weary!"

"She knows me at length," thought he; "we shall yet be happy!" Then, turning to her, and taking her unresisting hand, he murmured, "I am indeed weary—sing to me, Leona!"—And she sang. Her haunting voice rang in his ear as it had done long years ago; and when, oppressed by the recollection, his bosom heaved, and his breath came gaspingly, she seemed to think he slumbered, and lowered the modulated tones to a gentle, murmuring harmony. Her arm stole beneath his head; he dared not open his heavy eyes, lest the illusion should be broken; but he felt her breath warm on his cheek, and he knew

that she bent over him, and watched him, as in by-gone days. Dimly from beneath his own quivering lashes, he perceived her dark, loving eyes fixed upon him; and his heart ached with excess of hope.

Suddenly she rose; she grasped his arm with unnatural strength. "Of what wert thou dreaming?" said she, in a tone of passionate jealousy.

"I dreamed not; I slept not. Beloved, hear me!"

"Thou didst—thy dream was of Adelaide von Ringhen!" shouted the unhappy girl. Then, kneeling, with her head on his knees, she murmured,

"Forsake me not! Rodolph, forsake me not!"

With bitter agony he strove to make her comprehend him, but in vain; the ray was quenched, and when he attempted to detain her, she looked wildly on him, and disengaging her hands, with a shrill scream she flew up the staircase, and in the dim, uncertain light, appeared, after a moment's pause, to flit across the empty space into the arch beyond.

Count Rodolph departed. He sought the southern sky of Italy; he wandered in scenes familiar to him in youth; a heavy sickness fell on him, and months passed away ere he was sufficiently strong to resume his journey. The physician on whose skill he had depended to cure the disease under which his once-loved Leona suffered, was in Spain, attending a case of much difficulty, and in some respects similar, since the patient was afflicted with aberration of intellect, caused by a sudden shock. A messenger was despatched to Spain, and brought for answer, that a year, at least, must expire before the *dottore* could leave his present patient. That year and part of the next were passed by Count Rodolph in wandering from place to place, without any aim except a restless desire of change. At length he received the welcome intimation, that he might meet the *dottore* at Rome, and

thence proceed on their journey together. He was informed of the successful termination of the case which had been the cause of the delay, and once more hope entered into his heart and abode there.

On his arrival at Lindensberg, the faithful Caspar gave but a melancholy account of the poor crazed being in whom he was so deeply interested. He described her as more distracted than ever; coming frequently to the hamlet, and desiring velvets of light and rich colors to be sent for, which was complied with; and yet she never appeared in any other costume than the black hunting-dress. She had also latterly become most sad and dispirited; weeping bitterly, and believing herself to be in attendance on some sick or dying person, for whom she ordered medicines, and chose the most tempting fruit, all which was procured and executed for her in compliance with the count's parting orders. Rodolph's heart sank; but the physician bade him to be of good cheer, for that this new delirium showed the disorder to be coming to a crisis. It was agreed between them, that the *dottore* should meet the poor maniac in the hamlet, and endeavor to make her comprehend who he was, and his desire to be of service to the sick person she attended; and that Rodolph should await them at the ruined tower. Contrary to all expectation, Leona no sooner saw the physician, than she recognized him; and falling at his feet, she kissed his hands repeatedly, weeping, and inquiring into the circumstances of her mother's death, and alluding to scenes and people mutually familiar to both.

"There is hope," said the *dottore* to himself, as he soothed and answered her. Then, suddenly changing her manner, she eagerly asked his advice respecting the sick person she was in imaginary attendance upon, saying he had a fever, and was weakly, and she feared



he would sink under it. She hesitated, and appeared restless, when he offered to visit the invalid; but at length she nodded her head in token of assent.

Rodolph sate by the broken staircase awaiting their arrival in an agony of anxiety. He desired ardently to behold the effect of the signal, after the lapse of time during which he had been absent, and that the *dottore* likewise should witness the only symptom of recollection which had hitherto been given by the unhappy Leona.

To this end he had ordered Caspar to remain by the torrent, and when a messenger from the hamlet should give him notice of Leona's return homewards, to blow three blasts, as usual, on the hunting-bugle.

When Leona perceived Rodolph, a faint smile of puzzled recognition stole over her wan features. She paused and hesitated; at length she said, "It is long since we have met, noble stranger, and I can hardly now give you welcome, for Rodolph is still absent, and I am much troubled because of the sickness of one I love; nevertheless—— But come on, dear friend; why loiter we?" said she to the physician, with a sudden change of tone; "perhaps even now he dies!"

So saying, she swiftly ascended the flight of steps. When she reached the summit, she knelt down, and, lifting up a stone, drew from beneath it a coil of rope; this she wound patiently round, till a shattered plank which hung unperceived under the arch opposite, gray as the walls, and like them moss-grown and mouldering, was sufficiently raised to enable her, by a small exertion of strength, to lift the end and rest it on the last step.

"Great Heaven!" said Rodolph, shuddering, "is she about to cross on that plank?"

"Hush!" said the physician.

"This is my drawbridge," said Leona, smiling with a sort of triumph at the *dottore*, and without noticing the question of Rodolph. Then, laying her hand on his arm, she added earnestly, "Once it cracked beneath me—once, when I was carrying *him* across. But I never brought him out again."

"He who is now sick?" said the physician, in the voice of a person who humors a child in some folly.

"Yes," answered Leona, sighing, "he is very sick." Then, stooping toward the *dottore*, she added, in a tone of great importance, "He is the heir to Lindensberg."

It was with a cold, shuddering regret that Rodolph heard this explanation of the illusion that possessed her. "The heir to Lindensberg is dead, Leona," said he, mournfully. The maniac shook her head.

"The *woman* died," answered she; "she fled, and fell into the dark waters; *I* took *him*, but could not kill him, although I know he is my enemy!"

It was well for Rodolph, that the dizzy stupefaction which came over him at these words, prevented all evidence of emotion on his part.

"Well, Leona, I cannot cure him unless I see him," said the physician, in a composed tone; and, as he spoke, he laid his hand heavily on Rodolph's shoulder. Leona crossed the narrow, quivering plank, and disappeared beneath the archway.

"Think you this is true? O God! think you it is true?" murmured Rodolph.

"It may be," said his friend; "or the unhappy woman may have heard broken snatches of the story from the peasantry who supply her with food, and so have grown to imagine herself an actor in the events she has heard related. This is not an uncommon symptom of madness; but, true or visionary, a word

from you is fatal. Speak not, move not ; and perhaps you may regain at once Leona and your son."

Rodolph groaned, and hid his face. There was a long pause.

"She mocks us, or she hath forgotten," said the unhappy man at length, raising his haggard eyes to his friend's countenance. The *dottore* motioned for silence.

"Leona," said he, in a loud, clear tone, "I have other patients to visit;— is the boy there?"

"I do but adjust his mantle," was the reply ; and suddenly there appeared in the archway, as in a framed picture, two living figures ; Leona, and a child of six or seven years of age, tall, pale, and meagre, with long, silky, brown hair, curling down to his waist ; and large, blue eyes, that seemed painfully dazzled even by the mellow light of the evening. His excessive paleness was rendered yet more apparent by the varied brilliancy of the colors which composed his dress, a scarlet velvet mantle being fastened on a suit of glowing purple, trimmed with white miniver, and a small cap of emerald green, embroidered with pearls, set on his head. His cheeks were hollow, and his lips looked as though they had never learned to smile, so wan, and stiff, and feverish, did they appear. He leaned against his companion for support, and one thin little white hand clung to the folds of her drapery. At the unusual sound of a strange voice he started, and as his unaccustomed eyes sought to distinguish objects, and beheld the count and his friend, a faint shriek of terror escaped him.

"Hush," said Leona, soothingly ; "be not terrified, and thou shalt soon see Rodolph ;" and the child's wan lips moved, and he repeated with the exactitude of tone, and the faint sadness of an echo, "Rodolph !"

She lifted him in her arms, and smiling sadly at

the physician, she said, "Shall I bring him to thee, or will the cold air hurt him?"

"Bring him," calmly replied the physician, as he measured with his eye the strength of the plank, and the additional weight it would sustain in the passage of the attenuated and frail little being, so miraculously preserved. Lightly and steadily Leona advanced, while Rodolph's outstretched arms seemed already nearly to clutch his long lost child. She had reached the centre, when suddenly Caspar blew the three blasts on the signal-horn. Leona paused; the blood rushed to her colorless cheek, the light to her sunken eye.

"I hear thee, Rodolph!" exclaimed she; and pressing the pale child closely to her heart, she raised the ivory bugle to her faded lips.

There was a crash—a wild cry—and all was over.

Rodolph and the physician gazed on the archway. Where was the maniac, and the pale child with its silken hair? Where was the frail plank which stood between them and that living tomb, wherein his little son had so long been buried? What had gone down into that dark abyss?

Rodolph and the physician descended the broken stairs slowly, quietly, stupidly: to what purpose should they hurry their pace? A dock grew on the last step but one; the physician switched it with his cane: it was a rank weed, unsightly, and the impulse was to destroy it: he had not observed it as he ascended. They came to the end of the broken flight of steps, and stood in the court below. Something lay close to the *dottore's* feet: he looked down; it was a little, pale corpse, in a gaudy dress.

"In a fall from a very great height," said he, speaking very slowly, and glancing upwards, "the subject

generally dies from suffocation before the ground is touched; it is not, therefore, commonly, a death of pain."

Count Rodolph groaned, and pressed the hand of his friend. A little beyond lay the maniac Leona. She still breathed; and, as Rodolph approached, she opened her large, dark eyes, as if instinctively aware of his presence.

"Rodolph, beloved," said she, "I have been dreaming a dreadful dream. Even now, methinks, I suffer pain—I cannot rise; the cold has struck my limbs with a numbing pain; thou shouldst not have allowed me to slumber in the open air. I dreamed (alas! what torturing pain I suffer!) that thou didst forsake me for another—that thou wert wedded—that there was an heir to Lindensberg. O, rather than so dream again, I would wish to die now, on thy bosom." And she flung her arms round his neck, and moaned, and a slight shivering ran through her limbs. Her eyes, which had been gazing in his face, closed suddenly.—She was dead.

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"We are apt," said the old physician, when returning with Count Rodolph from one of his annual visits to Leona's tomb,— "we are apt to pity people for dying, and for the manner of their death, as though it were the crowning agony of nature; yet there may have been hours of unendurable misery in a man's life, to which his death may seem like a pleasant dream. Which, think you, was the bitterer hour to her who now rests in peace—that in which, bruised and dying, but with her arms twined round thy neck, she imagined herself waking from a slumber in the cold autumn wind, or that in which she first answered the blast of thy hunting-bugle, after thy confession of intended separation?"

## THE PARTING KISS.

“His act *did* not o’ertake his bad intent,  
And therefore must be buried as an intent  
That perished by the way.” — *Shakspeare*.

THE driver sounded his horn, and in one hour more I was to depart in the stage for my native state. The idea of revisiting the home of my childhood, of meeting with my brothers and sisters, and beholding, once more, my aged parents, before the grave should hide them forever from my view, filled me with rapture which I never had experienced before. Already transported in imagination over the long journey, I received the joyous welcome of the happy family. My good old father met me at the gate with the kindest demonstrations of affection; my mother, now feeble with years, and trembling with affliction, tottered half way down the steps to grasp my hand, and unable to restrain her feelings, burst into tears, whilst my little serious sister Clara ran to my arms, and folding hers about my neck, could not refrain, even in the midst of her gladness, from affectionately chiding me for not answering her letters. Blessed little sister! I kissed her pretty black eye, and promised to do better in future; and there was a joy — ay, a rapture — even in this reverie of imagination, which, if it could but last, I would not barter for the wide world’s wealth, and all its honors besides.

But every bliss has its bane. The reflection that I had to part with Fanny Morrison, whom I had so much loved, even unto adoration, soon put an end to this glow of happy feeling, and spread in my heart a corresponding poignancy of misery. This is the na-



ture of happiness. There is not a glad emotion of the breast which is not quickly chased by some obtrusive care. The visits of Joy are as short as those of the votaries of fashionable life; and the bosom that is elated by her transitory presence will assuredly experience an equal depression at her departure. Her smiles are like the vivid flashes of lightning that play upon the brown cheek of night, but vanish in an instant, and leave behind fourfold darkness. I thought of home, and my soul expanded; I thought of Fanny, and it sank in dejection. I loved this fair and excellent creature, not that the beauty of her whole sex seemed epitomized in her form and face, but more for the higher brilliancy of her polished mind; and above all, because of her unsophisticated purity of heart. My love was reciprocated. Daily we renewed our vows of perpetual constancy, and the *green-eyed monster*, Jealousy, never sullied our minds or disturbed our repose; but, mutually confiding, we enjoyed all the luxury of tenderest affection, unmixed with the bitterness of doubt and distrust; and if there be such as positive happiness on earth, "it is this, it is a thing." From my first acquaintance with Fanny, I had never been separated from her even for a week at a time: to part with her now, and possibly forever — it seemed like death.

I had already taken leave of her on the evening of the preceding day; but now that I was about to enter upon my journey almost immediately, I could not resist the inclination, which increased in ardor as the time of departure drew nearer, once more to seize the fair, soft hand, and say, "Good by." I hastened to her dwelling. She was at her piano, playing the plaintive air of "*Roy's Wife*," the very tune which of all others I most delighted to hear; and she could play, too, with such enchanting skill — so touching to

the heart! As I entered the room, she ceased the music, but quickly resumed it at my request, and accompanied the instrument with a voice that breathed all the magic harmony of *Nourhamal*. She sang,

“Fare thee well, since thou must leave me ;  
But O, let not our parting grieve thee,  
For I will still be thine, believe me.”

And there was an applicability in these words to my situation, such a suitableness of sentiment to the occasion, that made them sink deep into my burning heart; and although I cannot say that the music, like *St. Cecilia's*, “drew an angel down,” I will say that she sang like an angel, and wore all the celestial loveliness of one. Could the song never close, and her beauty never die, who would ask for a brighter heaven?

As she finished the strain, she closed the lid of the piano, and turning her beautiful face, with “bonny blue eyes,” upon me, she said, “I now have a task for you to perform.” “And what is that task?” I inquired. “It is,” said she, “a compliance with your promise, made a long time ago, to write an original piece in my *album*; the evening is favorable for poetry, and I insist upon your writing.” At first I thought this was merely intended to divert my mind from the melancholy which she perceived was gathering around it; for I was so far from ever being guilty of writing poetry, that I really could not believe for a moment that she seriously thought me capable of such a perpetration; but in a few minutes she took from the book-case a neatly-bound album, and spreading it on the table where pen and ink were previously placed, she invited me to the task with an air of solemnity, which could not fail to convince me that the request was made more in earnest than through cour-

tesy. What could I do? I had not the heart to refuse, nor the genius to comply. My brain was as dry as "the remainder biscuit after a voyage." Never did I stand so much in need of mind, or deplore this want so much, as on this occasion. True, the evening was serene and beautiful, and might have warmed the breast that had the least spark of poetical feeling about it; but mine had no dormant energies of this nature to awaken, and neither the kindling influence of fine weather, nor the more inspiring power of Fanny's presence, could remove my constitutional inability to rhyme. To attempt it, I knew very well that the failure would be so completely shameful that I should lose much of her esteem, and yet not to do it, must inevitably incur her most serious displeasure. I determined, however, to risk the attempt; and seating myself by the table, I seized the pen in despair, dipped it in the stand, and turning my eyes upwards, but not in "fine frenzy rolling," I began cogitating on what subject I should fix my fanciful effusion.

I had remained in this attitude but a short time, before my musings appeared to be unceremoniously interrupted. The whole family were in busy uproar. The servants were running in every direction, from room to room, all actively engaged in cleaning and decorating the mansion. Some were hanging new damask curtains over the windows, some regulating the glasses on a well-loaded sideboard, others replenishing the flower-pots with water and fresh roses, whilst Fanny's youngest sister was fantastically ornamenting a pair of large silver candlesticks with paper leaves. The Turkey carpet was removed, and the floor dry rubbed: indeed, all the preparations usually made for a dancing party were going on, and apparently for that purpose. Presently a servant girl en-

tered the room with a bundle of evergreens, with which she commenced decorating the mantel-piece, and then proceeded to a large mirror, that hung on the wall opposite to me, in such a position that it reflected to my view the image of Fanny, as she lay reclining on the sofa in a thoughtful and pensive manner. Her countenance is frequently tinged with a slight melancholy; but now it seemed to wear a deep gloom. I certainly had never seen her face so clouded by sadness before; it was pale; her eyes pored on the floor; her mind appeared to be abstracted, for she took no notice of what was going on till the servant maid inquired if she designed to have the walls of the parlor festooned with vines. "Do as you please," she replied; and rising from the sofa, she left the room with a tear, as I thought, quivering in her soft blue eye.

What was the meaning of all this? I could form no possible conjecture. I inquired of the servant — her words were as a dagger to my heart. "Why, have you not heard," said she, "that this is Miss Fanny's wedding night?" — I could hear no more; the maid would have proceeded, but my brain reeled, and I fell upon the floor in a state of insensibility. How long I remained in that situation I know not; but I was awakened from it by the entrance of a tall young gentleman, of handsome deportment, and splendidly attired, with a "broad felicity of face," bespeaking a light mind and happy heart. It was for his coming that all these preparations were made; for he was my happy rival, who was that very night to be married to the fair Fanny. Prompted by desperation, I seized at the villain's throat. He fled. He was my friend; we were born in the same village, educated at the same school, and had been intimate from our boyish days; I wore him in "my heart's core," and not a

circumstance had ever transpired, until the present occurrence, to weaken the band of brotherhood that bound us together. Of all my acquaintance, he was the only one to whom I had communicated the secret of my attachment to Fanny. He abused that confidence to supplant me in her affections. And shall I bow in degrading humiliation to the wrong? No — rather let me perish first. Cursed be the coward arm that falters in a just revenge. With imprecations on my rival's head, I fled the habitation.

All idea of my journey was now banished from my mind; my every thought was devoted to revenge; my heart was a furnace of exasperated passions; my very blood boiled with vengeance. Retiring to my room, I whetted my dagger and reloaded my pistol. "I will mar his mirth," said I to myself. "I will burst upon him in the midst of his anticipated heaven like an unexpected *Abelina*." And let not mistaken piety denounce all human vengeance as unrighteous. The serpent is crushed in the earth because of his guile, which converted the bloom of Eden into a wilderness of woe; and so should the demon still be crushed, when, forsaking his reptile shape, he assumes the human form, and spreads over the paradise of the heart a wintry desolation. Reader, when you have loved as I have loved, and be supplanted by a wretch calling himself your friend, but whose smiles are the very "fiend's arch mock," then will you be ready to exclaim with me, "Who'll sleep in safety that hath done this wrong?"

I know not how the time passed off, but night-fall had now come on. Dressing myself in apparel suited for the wedding, thither I went, sternly determined to "speak daggers" to the bride, and to use one on the treacherous author of my misery. The guests had assembled, and the nuptial hour had almost arrived;

the bride's-maid was placing the last flower in the bridal wreath, and as she twined it in the shining curl, I heard her distinctly singing the beautiful lines by Mrs. Hemans —

“ Bring flowers, bring flowers for the bride to wear ;  
They were born to blush in her shining hair.  
She is leaving the scenes of her childish mirth ;  
Her place is now by another's side.  
Bring flowers for the locks of the fair young bride.’

The long parlor was splendidly illuminated. The chandelier, suspended in the centre, threw around a brilliant light, which the mirrors augmented by reflection, whilst the warm flashes from the sparkling eyes of the laughing girls still added to the blaze, and made the room glow with the lustre of the skies. The light of heaven was there, and merriment was there. The young voices, mingling in sprightly conversation, were so many separate tones of melody ; and mirth was in all — all was gladness ; and to one whose heart had not been rendered impenetrable to joy, it was so sweet to look upon the innocent faces, and to witness the unaffected vivacity that prevailed ! Once I could have enjoyed the scene ; but the chord in my bosom that might have vibrated in unison was now snapped asunder ; and amidst all this gayety, and joy, and beauty, my heart retained its midnight darkness, still brooding over its ruin, and nourishing its gloomy wrath. I mixed not with the joyous company, but retiring to the remotest corner of the room, I folded my arms, and impatiently awaited the coming of the bridegroom and his bride, where I might take, even at the altar of Hymen, that sanguinary vengeance which despair prompted, and my wrongs justified.

They soon came. There was a silence in the hall. I raised my eyes, and beheld the happy couple stand-



ing on the floor, their attendants ranged on either side. The whole company pressed forward to look upon the fair young bride. Never had one shone so beautiful; never had Fanny appeared so lovely to my eyes as then. A long, white veil fell lightly over her forehead, like a milk-white cloud floating before the evening star; she blushed, and the carnation on her cheek shone like the glancing sunbeam on the "Hill of Benlomen." Her tresses were darker than the raven's wing; they rolled in glossy curls down her neck, and spread upon her ivory shoulders. Her form was the perfection of human symmetry; she was the statue of Medici animated to life by the warmest, brightest fire of heaven, exhibiting a constellation of beauty, where every charm mingled its light in one unbounded blaze. I gazed upon her, and the recollection of former times came rushing on my soul. I thought of the many evenings I had spent with her in this same hall, under happier circumstances; of the many protestations of eternal love exchanged between us as we walked, arm in arm, to church of Sabbath mornings, and of the times that we have loitered on the banks of a neighboring river, and sitting beneath the umbrageous oaks, would talk of the fairest prospect of happiness when we should be united in marriage as we were in affection. Often has she told me, in these delightful rambles, that Heaven had designed us for each other — I for her and she for me; and little did I dream that I should ever behold her the bride of another. I should not behold it. A thousand times would I have rather gone with a sprig of rosemary in my fingers to view her in the ruins of death. And here let me beg the reader to forgive my weakness. Mock not my misery. If you cannot sympathize with the afflicted, let us part. I write for those of softer mould, with more of the "milk of human

kindness" in their nature, who can feel another's woe, who love to bind the broken spirit, and to pour the balm of consolation into the agonized bosom of despair. There are such; and, ye generous few, I thank you in the name of the afflicted, whose sorrows you delight to soothe; I thank you in the name of all who have experienced the blight of ruined affection. Cheer them by thy kindness if thou canst, for their hearts have become desolate, and they stand in need of all the consolation to be derived from the tenderest sympathies of friendship: the virtuous will ever extend it; the vicious have none to bestow.

But to return to my story. The venerable minister who was to unite the happy couple in wedlock, now assumed his station on the floor; and in a moment all was silence. Whilst he was addressing to them a few prefatory admonitions, I silently made my way through the crowd, and planted myself at my rival's back. I laid my hand upon my dagger: 'twas strange my heart began to falter in its steadiness. Then it was that the enormity of the act which I was about to perpetrate, flashed across my mind in all its horror. He still looked like the friend of my youth: to imbrue my hands in his blood—to murder him—it seemed too horrid; I trembled in every joint, and a cold perspiration bedewed my forehead. And yet must he triumph in my ruin? Hath he not wronged me? Is not vengeance mine, and shall I shrink from the meditated blow? There was a mighty conflict in my bosom between its gentle impulses and its angry passions; but vengeance triumphed. I thought my rival beheld me; and in the look which he bestowed, there seemed to be an air of exultation and haughty defiance that reinvigorated my nerve, reanimated my resentment. Again he stood before me in all the blackness of his guilt; a perfidi-

ous demon, who had mercilessly robbed me of my "life's life." The aged minister proceeded in the marriage ceremony — "If any know a lawful reason why this couple should not be joined in the holy state of matrimony, let them speak." He paused as if for a reply. Now was my time. I touched the bride upon the shoulder; she turned. "Be not alarmed," I cried, "for I meditated no injury to you. O, Fanny, when I admired the diamond brightness of your beauty, I did not think your bosom had the diamond's hardness too." I could say no more; utterance forsook me; and in the frenzy of despair, twisting my fingers in the locks of the bewildered bridegroom, at one convulsive effort I felled him on the floor, and planted my knee upon his breast. The whole company were petrified to marble. Before they could sufficiently recover from their panic, to render assistance to the imploring victim at my feet, I snatched my pistol from the belt, and cocked it at his throbbing temple. At this moment the fair Fanny caught me by the hand, and giving it a gentle and affectionate pressure, she said, "Come, come; are you not going to write in my album? It has been almost an hour since you seated yourself down for that purpose." "Write in your album, fair creature?" said I; "why, yes, I will write in your album." And so saying, I aroused me from the reverie into which I had fallen from the time I took my seat by the table, and was much relieved on finding that the above dreadful circumstances existed only in a dream of imagination. Again I dipped my pen in the stand, and having nothing poetic about me, I penned the above. The stage horn summoned me as I finished, and I just had time to print on Fanny's lip—the *Parting Kiss*.

## THE LOWLY LADY.

THE sad but stately procession had passed into the church, and even the aisles of the venerable building were thronged with persons. One might have thought, who looked upon the coronet, glittering on the cushion of crimson velvet, and all the other insignia of high rank, that curiosity alone had drawn thither such a crowd; but a deeper interest was marked on every countenance; and the firm voice of the minister had faltered more than once, as he read the solemn service. Yet the coffin was that of a child, a little, tender infant, who had died in its first, unconscious helplessness. Every one thought of the father, standing up among them, and looking so desolate in his grief. More than one fond mother wept, and drew her red cloak closely round the infant on her bosom, as she gazed round upon the mournful pomp, and the little coffin, and the young nobleman—childless, and worse than widowed—O yes! worse than widowed! as he stood there, and followed with his eyes the movement of the men then placing the coffin of his child in the shadowy darkness of the open vault below him. That church was a place of agonizing recollection to the young earl of Derby. Often had he entered it a happy husband; and, as he walked slowly down the aisle to his carriage, he could not help recalling the day when his beautiful and modest bride had clung, in trembling bashfulness, to his arm, when he had there, for the first time, called her his wife. “I am sick of all this idle pomp!” he said to himself, as he entered the wide hall of his own magnificent residence, attended by his train of servants, and met by the obsequious bows

of the men who had conducted the funeral; "I am sick of all this mockery! I will bear it no longer. Would that I were a poor, hard-working peasant, with some honest hearts to care for me, and love me. I am heartily tired of your great people!"

Not many weeks after the funeral of the heir of the noble house of Derby, a solitary wayfaring man stopped at the turning of a little foot-path, which led down the sloping side of the hill overlooking the village of H——. He had been leisurely wandering on since the early hours of the morning, and had not yet found the place where he would rest for the night. "Here, at least, is a happy scene," he said, as he looked down upon the little village at the foot of the hill. About fifty or sixty persons were scattered, in careless groups, about the pleasant green. Some of them were dancing beneath a venerable grove of elms; others were crowded round the only booth which had been raised in the rustic fair. "At least, I may witness their enjoyment, though I cannot share it," he said; and, in a few moments, he was standing beneath the old trees on the green.

But, although he was not recognized as the earl of Derby, and disgusted by the attentions paid to his rank and station, he found the familiarity of vulgar minds and low manners not quite so agreeable as he had perhaps expected. Quietly he turned away from the noisy scene. He passed over the old bridge, which crosses the clear and shallow stream, and turned down a lane, the banks of which were overgrown with wild flowers, and straggling bushes of birch, sufficiently high and thick to meet overhead, and form a perfect bower of grateful shade. A poor woman was returning home through the lane with her children, her infant sleeping soundly on her bosom, and a curly-headed urchin distending his cheeks with

puffing at a little painted trumpet, the horrid grating of which had all the charm of novelty and noise to him. The young mother looked so hot and tired, and withal so good-humored, that the earl could not resist asking her if she could direct him to a lodging. "Not in that merry village we have just left," he said, "for I am unwell and tired."

The woman pointed to a little path, not very far from the spot where they stood, which turned suddenly out of the lane into a wood, overhanging the river; and directed him to follow it through a large corn-field, and up a very steep, sandy lane, and then, for about half a mile over;—but such directions are tiresome enough, when one is obliged to listen to them to learn one's own way; here, they would be even more so. Besides, I am not sure the earl attended to the poor woman, for he lost his way. He walked on, wrapped in his own melancholy thoughts, but soothed, in every sense, by the cool, fresh air, the gurgling flow of the river, and all those distant sounds, which, in the quiet fields, on a fair, calm evening, fall so sweetly indistinct upon the ear. But the sun had set before the wanderer awoke to the recollection of the purpose before him. He looked around him; he saw green and sloping hills, many stately trees, and the same calm river flowing gently below, but no house. At last, where the leafy shade was deepest, he discovered a pile of old, quaintly-shaped chimneys, opposed against the glowing sky. He had not proceeded far in the direction of the farm-house, which now plainly appeared among the trees, when a light step seemed to approach him, and then stopped suddenly; and he heard the sound of unrestrained weeping. A hazel copse separated him from the meadow whence the sound proceeded; but, on peeping through a little opening, he saw that a young girl



was sitting on the bank of the meadow on the other side. For a little while she continued weeping — only for a little while — then, clasping her hands together, she raised her head, and her whole heart seemed to look up to Heaven in her meek and steadfast gaze.

Still she sat there, almost without stirring, except that, once or twice, she looked down upon the green grass, and her hand dropped, half forgetfully and half playfully, among the flowers that grew in wild luxuriance beside her, as if she was pleased with, but scarcely knew she noticed them. Just then the rich song of the nightingale burst upon the stillness of the evening, and stole away her ear; and though her thoughts seemed yet to linger on about the subject which had made her weep, she listened, till at last she smiled; and so, minute after minute passed away, and gradually she forgot all her trouble; and the only expression on her fair face was innocent gladness.

Let no one suppose that, in this fair country girl, we have met with any maiden of gentle birth, brought down to a low estate by the hard uses of adversity; nor any wonder of her native village, gifted with talents of the highest order. O no! Lucy was none of these. What was she? A fair and happy maiden of low birth, (if to be born of poor and honest parents be low birth,) of no accomplishments or education beyond reading and — let me remember — yes, she could write. She read well, for her voice was full of natural melody; and practice, and genuine feeling, and above all, piety, had made her very perfect.

Lucy's features were not beautiful, but their modest, innocent expression was better than mere beauty. Her hands were not the whitest in the world, though

delicately, nay, exquisitely shaped: their little palms might have been softer; but, if it might have been said of her, as of the fair and happy milkmaid, "she makes her hand hard with labor," it might have been well added, "and her heart soft with pity;" for they who knew her say she was the kindest creature that ever lived, and speak of a gentle and winning courteousness of manners, that gave a charm to every look, and every word she uttered. But although she was one of nature's own sweet gentlewomen, and unaffectedly modest and pious, she was only a poor, uneducated country girl. There was one, however, who soon began to find new hope — new life, I might almost say — in the society of Lucy; one who, in spite of all the pride or aristocracy of his habits and his prejudices, began to feel it a privilege to be addressed as a familiar friend by the pure-minded maiden; who felt, in his inmost heart, the influence of her modest, cheerful piety; and paid her, from his heart, the homage of respect and love that was the sweeter from being half made up of gratitude.

He could not help smiling, when he made his proposals, in due form, to the relations of his sweet Lucy; for they did not choose to have their child thrown away upon one who, for what they knew to the contrary, might be little better than a beggar, or a sort of (they did not quite say the word) "vagabond." They doubted, and questioned, and wavered, and questioned him again, till the earl began to feel uncomfortable, and to stammer and blush; and thus, in fact, to make them really suspicious; for he had quite forgotten to provide against this most probable issue of his suit to them.

"You see," said an old uncle, at last, who was the head of the family, and the best spokesman, "you may be a very good sort of a young man, and I have noth-

ing to say against you ; but you are, or at least have been, till now, when you're plucking up a bit, a poor, sickly, idle body ; and, suppose you fall ill, or take to no kind of employ, and have nothing coming in of your own — why, Lucy's fifty pounds, and the hundred that I shall leave her, when, please Heaven, I die, will go but a very little way. I tell you what," he said, " brother and sister," (turning to Lucy's parents, and looking very wise,) " don't be in a hurry to give your consent ; Lucy, though I say it, is as good a girl as any in the land, and fit for a lord — yes ! I say it again, (though you seem to smile,) young man — fit for any lord in the land."

Lucy had been very busily plucking the withered leaves from a geranium, which her lover had given her ; but now she turned round, pale and trembling, for she feared the effect of her uncle's harangue upon her father, who was apt to be as positive as his brother. She trembled, and her heart throbbed with agitation, for she cared not if he whom she loved were penniless ; but she felt, that without the consent of her parents, (servants of God, and kind parents, as they both were,) she could not marry him. She turned, as gentle, loving daughters will, on all such occasions, to her own tender mother, and she had not to speak ; her mother could read her looks, and she could not resist the tears which rose so suddenly into the soft eyes of her duteous child. Mothers, or wives, I meant to say, have a winning way of their own — particularly mild, submissive wives, such as Lucy's mother ; and what with her own influence as a wife, and her own woman's wit, or (in truer words) calm good sense, it was soon agreed that Lucy should marry her love on this condition — that the answer to a certain letter, to be written by him, for a good character, etc., proved satisfactory.

In due time, to the very day, a letter arrived, directed to Lucy's father. With this letter the father and the uncle were quite satisfied; and now Lucy, who had been, at times, unusually silent, recovered all her cheerfulness, and went about the house singing (so her mother thought) like a nightingale. Thomas Clifford — for so he called himself — was married to his Lucy, and all the fair and modest girls of the neighborhood were waiting round the church door, to fling basketfuls of flowers in the little path, as Clifford led his bride to their own cottage.

He heard the blessing of many poor, aged creatures, who lingered about in the sunshine of the churchyard, upon his humble, yet lovely bride. Every one who met them on that happy morning, smiled upon them, and blessed them.

“High rank, heaps of gold, could not buy such blessings as this!” said he to himself; “but my sweet and pious Lucy has won the love of every heart. These people, too, have known her from her childhood!”

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“That is a grand place, indeed!” said Lucy, as, toward the close of their second day's journey, they approached an ancient and almost princely edifice; “but does our road lie through the park?”

“Not exactly through the park,” he replied, “but I thought my Lucy might like to see these fine grounds, and the house and gardens. I have known the gardener and housekeeper for years; and I am sure we shall find them very civil, and willing to show us any little attention in their power, and we have time enough, though the sun is getting low, for we are just at home.”

Lucy was delighted. She had never seen a nobleman's house before, she said.

"Well! all those large rooms, and the pictures, and all the fine furniture are very grand," said Lucy; "but my eyes ache with looking at them; I like this garden a great deal better. What a beautiful one it is! But may we sit down in this arbor of honeysuckle so near the house?"

Lucy sat in silence for some little time, gazing round her at the venerable house, and the trees and gardens; at length she said, "I wonder if the lord of this grand place is happy? Is the earl of Derby a good man, dear husband? Is he kind and free-spoken to the poor? Is he a married man?" she added, looking with a smile of peculiar sweetness in her husband's face.

"How many questions you have given me to answer, Lucy! Let me consider! Yes, he is a married man; he married, not many months ago, a young country girl, such another as yourself, dear Lucy."

"Poor thing!" said Lucy; and she sighed from her very heart.

"Why do you sigh, my own wife?" he demanded. "Do you envy that poor country maiden?"

"Do I envy her?" she replied, in a voice of tender reproach; "what a strange question! Do I envy any one?" And as she said this, she drew more closely round her the arm which encircled her slender waist. "Would I exchange my husband with any one?" she added, looking up tenderly and lovingly into his face. "I sighed in pity for the poor young lady, (for a lady she is now;) such a change is enough to turn her head."

"Would it turn yours, Lucy?" he said.

"Perhaps it might!" she said, in the simplest and most natural manner. "But is she really happy? Does she love him for himself alone?"

"My sweet Lucy," he began, and as he spoke,

his wife thought that he had never seemed so tenderly respectful toward her — “My sweet Lucy, you alone can answer these last questions; you smile! I see you look amazed upon me; but I repeat it, you alone!”

“But first,” said Lucy, very artlessly, “I must be lady here; you must make me countess of Derby!”

She had scarcely said this, when, from one of the castle turrets, a bell began to toll: Clifford rose up instantly, and, without saying a word, led his wife up to the castle. They entered the chapel there, in which the servants and the tenants had all assembled, and the chaplain was preparing to commence the evening service; then, leading the wondering Lucy into the midst of them, he presented her to them as their future mistress, the countess of Derby, his wife.

Lucy did not speak; she could scarcely stand; the color forsook her face, and she looked as one about to faint. She stared first at her husband, and then at the domestics around her; and at last she began to comprehend every thing. Eagerly she seized her husband’s hand, which she had dropped in her surprise, now affectionately extended to her; then, with an effort that was very visible, but which gave new interest to her in the eyes of all present, she regained somewhat of her natural and modest self-possession, and, raising her innocent face, she courtesied to the ground, and met the respectful greeting of those around her with smiles, which, perhaps, spoke more at once to the heart than the best wisdom of words. The earl of Derby led his wife to his own seat, and placed her beside him.

Lucy knelt down upon a cushion of embroidered velvet, with the sculptured escutcheons and stately banners of the house of Derby above her; but per-



haps, of all the high-born dames of that ancient family, none ever knelt there with a purer heart, or with an humbler spirit, than that LOWLY LADY.

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## WOMEN ARE FICKLE.

It was about ten o'clock, of a fine bright morning, that the countess of Salignac awoke. With her lovely white hand she pushed aside the curtains of her bed, and rang for her maid, who leisurely made her appearance.

"You are somewhat tardy, Marguerite," said her mistress.

"My lady, I was receiving a visitor, the Viscount Charles d'Atry."

"What, before twelve o'clock? For a country beau, that is being in a hurry indeed. For my part, I am not at all anxious to see him. I am going to write a letter."

"But the viscount is waiting, my lady."

"Let him wait, Marguerite."

Marguerite wisely left the room, and the capricious beauty indited the following epistle: —

"Dearest Matilda,

"You are a happy woman, not to inhabit this hateful city. I am almost ready to grumble at you for leaving me here so long. I am in the midst of a racket which will certainly kill me. I am deprived of sleep even in those hours usually devoted to that purpose. Pity me, my lovely friend. Pleasure dwells in Paris, and happiness in the country;

and trust me, yours is the better lot. But I, too, shall soon share your happiness, if the Hermitage, whither we contemplate retiring, is nearly finished. I send you the last opera, which would be prettier if it were less fatiguing. Do you know, dearest, that our retreat will be much talked of? Six pretty widows, with each twenty-five thousand francs a year, and neither of them twenty-five years of age, leaving Satan and the world, and its pomps and vanities, and starting off one fine morning to live in a desert, to pray and weep, without rhyme or reason, like St. Francis or St. Jerome, will, I flatter myself, produce some sensation in Paris. When I say pray and weep, I yield my pen to the guidance of my head, as my old fool of a lover, the academician, said, when he laid his heart and laurels at my feet, of which precious treasures I have no idea of depriving my sex. Do not be alarmed, Matilda; you, dearest, alone know whom I love.

“Do not be alarmed. I know that men only love well in novels; and Werter has ruined me for any lovers. It is utterly impossible to love in Paris; one has no time for that sort of thing. I have such a capital theory on that subject, that I brave all dangers, and set at defiance the mob of dandies that besiege me. But pray, pray let the Hermitage be got ready. The very streets of Paris oppress, distress me. I am dying to roam about the fields with you, to gather violets and daisies, and drink milk. I am more than ever convinced, dearest, that true happiness can only be enjoyed, as M. Lamartine so beautifully says, while sitting under a far-spreading oak, and looking at peasants dancing on the green.

“To think of love when one has a friend, what a perfect horror! Matilda, I await your orders. Let me have but a line from you, and I set off instantly

to join you at your sweet, sweet Hermitage, for which we have a sweet, sweet name. Ah, I had almost forgotten: you must examine our garden, and choose a little shady, retired nook, where I can erect a pretty little temple, dedicated to friendship. My architect has procured me the design of the temple at Turin, which I assure you is the ninth wonder of the world. You shall see it. I have wasted so much money lately, that it is quite time now to think of something useful. Farewell, my only, only love; we shall soon be in each other's arms; until which happy hour, I send you as many kisses as there are miles between us.

“HENRIETTA DE SALIGNAC.”

This important letter sealed and despatched, the countess bethought herself of her visitor.

“My lady,” said Marguerite, quietly, “the viscount is still down stairs. He would not go away. There he stands, with his letter from your uncle in his hand. He says he is your cousin.”

“First or second cousin, Marguerite?”

“That I do not know, my lady; but he certainly looks like you. He has beautiful dark eyes, and black hair, and a famous pair of mustaches. He is very young, very tall, and very handsome; but for all that, I do not admire his mustaches.”

“Who asked you to tell me all this nonsense?” said the countess.

“Ah, my lady, my lady, he was standing gazing in perfect ecstasy at your picture.”

“Ah, another victim!” sighed forth the beauty.

Madame de Salignac found her early visitor as Marguerite had described, with folded arms, and eyes and heart so riveted on the beautiful portrait, that he did not notice the entrance of the lovelier original.

It is true that the countess's pretty little feet touched the ground as lightly and noiselessly as the falling snow. The interview was a short one. The viscount presented his letter, and owing either to the intercession of an uncle, all powerful with Henrietta, or to the title of cousin, or to the graceful reserve of his own manners, Charles received permission to call whenever it suited him. One week's time saw him enlisted among the most assiduous and ardent of the countess's lovers. His friends saw it with pity and regret. In vain they asked him, "Why will you devote yourself to a coquette, who laughs at your affection, and is talking of secluding herself from the world? Why will you swell the number of those whose flame she feeds with smiles and contempt? Do you expect to change her nature, and soften that heart of iron? Charles, gaze upon and admire the countess as you would one of Raphael's lovely Madonnas; but if you want a wife, choose her from those who do not pique themselves upon abjuring love. Madame de Salignac's kingdom is not of this world."

The unfortunate young lover always assented to the truth of these observations; yet every day he grew pale and thinner, and every evening found him at his post; every evening, like a slave, he found himself fast bound in the fetters, which, in the morning, he flattered himself he had burst forever. Struggling without subduing such affection, was only feeding its flame. Exhausted at length by his inward struggles, maddened by the sneers and jokes of his friends, and dreading the approaching departure of Henrietta, Charles determined to seal his fate one way or another. He swore that if she was not his wife within a fortnight, all Paris should ring with the tale of a young nobleman blowing out his brains at the very feet of his cruel mistress. This resolution

somewhat restored his peace of mind; he could not believe that his fair cousin would willingly cause his death; and soothed and flattered by his own ideas, his cheek regained its bloom, and his eye its fire. One morning he dressed himself with extreme care, ordered at a fashionable store a rich and beautiful *Corbeille de Mariage*, and bought an admirable pair of pistols, which having loaded, he repaired to the house of Madame de Salignac.

It was about eleven o'clock, and the countess was in her boudoir, surrounded by twenty mantua-makers, who were busy displaying loads of hats, capes, blonde, silks, and flowers. For a woman on the point of giving up the world, one might have censured the admiring, envying glances she bestowed on all these vanities. There is a devil which no daughter of Eve can ever resist; and that devil is love of dress. The coquettish countess first held up to view a blonde scarf, then a delicate rose-colored silk, and with heart and hand intent upon the finery, artfully set before her eyes, testified, by broken and involuntary sentences, her admiration and delight. In the midst of her preoccupation, the door suddenly flew open, and in rushed the viscount.

"Henrietta," he said, coming up to her, and speaking in a low, agitated tone, "I have come to know my fate. Either you or death must be my bride."

"Of these two very similar brides," replied Henrietta, coolly, "I am sadly afraid, my handsome cousin, that you will have to choose the latter. — But only look at this cape; is it not a perfect love, Charles? was there ever such exquisite work?"

"We will talk of capes some other time, countess. My answer! my answer!"

"Why, what are we talking about now, Charles?"

"I am talking about myself, Henrietta — of my life,

my happiness, my passionate love. Hear me :—grant me your hand, or witness my death. Answer me seriously, Henrietta—life or death?”

“To be frank and serious, Charles, I would very much like this cape.”

“No, no,—it is my death you seek. You shall be gratified, madam. Go on—buy capes—do not think of me. How could I suppose myself of more importance in your eyes than a cape, a new cape. I must have been mad.”

“Somewhat so, I admit, Charles. Upon the whole, I should prefer this pretty dress. I mean to go to the opera to-morrow evening, and I have nothing to wear. It is a perfect love—the color, the make, every thing lovely. Come, Charles, do not look so gloomy. When a woman is full of business, you should not come and talk to her about love and suicide. Well, I have quite made up my mind that I will buy this sweet dress.”

Though Charles felt that his very existence depended upon this frivolous, careless creature, yet could he hardly restrain a smile at her passion for gewgaws. He quietly and silently listened to a long discussion about thread and needles, and though almost choked by contending emotions, appeared perfectly calm and self-possessed. What a contrast was there between the quiet, graceful manner of the countess, and the few friendly words she now and then, as from politeness, addressed to him, and her enthusiasm about a piece of lace, her screams of delight at a feather, her perfect ecstasy at the sight of a wreath of roses; between the attention she bestowed upon all this nonsense, and the perfect neglect with which she treated the devoted, overwhelming passion of the young viscount! This manner struck Charles to the very heart.



At last, to his great relief, the mantua-makers departed, the room was cleared, and Charles exclaimed —

“What an hour of agony have I passed! Was it done purposely, Henrietta? Do you only live to torment me?”

“Why, my dear friend —”

Here the door again opened, and a servant announced the Baron and Baroness de Menvil and General Derville. Charles, disappointed and enraged, flew out of the house. One day had he lost, and one step had he come nearer to his grave. The rest of this miserable day he spent in gazing at the rain, which fell in torrents, writing letters, and loading and unloading his pistols.

The next day, at one o'clock, he rang at Madame de Salignac's door — she was dressing to ride in the *Bois de Boulogne*. The next day he tried two o'clock — the lady was parking. The third day, at three o'clock — the countess was shopping. Charles had not foreseen all these engagements. His only comfort was loading and unloading his pistols. A few days now remained. “I will try every day,” he said; “and yet when, when shall I find her alone, disengaged?” The unhappy youth would tear his hair then dress himself and hurry to the house, just in time to see her, covered with jewels and japonicas, glowing with beauty, step into her carriage and drive off, to delight other eyes, gladden other hearts. One day he took it in his head to go there in the afternoon. He hoped to find his capricious love just returned from the Bois de Boulogne, where, having been flattered into good humor by the compliments of her numerous admirers, and her heart perhaps softened by the sight of some tender lovers enjoying *tête-à-tête* amidst the verdant alleys, he hoped to find her more disposed to

favor his suit. He congratulated himself upon this happy idea. "Five o'clock!" he cried; "that is the fated hour. At six I shall return home an accepted lover." And he fired off one of his pistols. Some lurking presentiment induced him to allow the other to remain loaded. At six o'clock he came back, pale, haggard, wretched. He had found the countess stretched out on a sofa, either reading or pretending to read. He painted his love, and wretched state of suspense, in the most touching terms. The countess laughed, turned her back, and wondered why dinner was so long coming; and when he urged her to make him happy, she in return urged him to hasten his repast. Charles rushed out of the room in a fit of desperation.

The next day was his last, and Henrietta had invited him to attend her to the opera, on condition of being perfectly silent respecting his love. He made an attempt, at eight o'clock in the evening, to see her; but she was dressing for the opera. Charles, having seen his pistol properly loaded, and having left it on his table, followed his capricious but lovely mistress to the last scene of amusement he expected to visit on earth.

But, once seated by her side in the brilliant opera, the viscount became completely absorbed by the music. He forgot his love and his pistol, and intent only on the heroine of the piece, with her he shed tears, and with her rejoiced, till all recollection of his own misfortunes was merged in his delighted admiration of the pageant before him.

When Henrietta perceived, by his burning cheeks and kindling eyes, that even her charms for the present were disregarded, she took the alarm, and even her flinty nature began to melt. The opera-house had never looked so brilliant, the ladies never so lovely, so beautifully dressed; the music never before sounded

so delightfully ; the dancers had never displayed such grace : all was enchantment, and the theme of every tongue was love.

The opera out, Charles escorted his fair cousin home. As he took her hand at the door, he felt it slightly tremble, and in her sweetest tones she said, "Charles, why are you in such a hurry to say good night ? Will you not come in ?"

"It is near midnight, Henrietta, and this is a fated hour."

"Why so, my young cousin ? Come, walk in, and tell me why it is you dislike the pretty, sentimental hour of midnight."

As she finished this sentence, Charles found himself by her side on the sofa of her drawing-room.

"Midnight, fair countess," he said, "is the hour of crime. People steal at midnight, fight duels, commit suicides at midnights. Do not all poets call midnight the hour of spectres, of crime, of terror ? and were they not correct in doing so ?"

"No, Charles, they were wrong. For poet, read liar. Tell me, then, grave Mentor, at what hour you young men leave the opera or the theatre ; at what time you go to balls and concerts ; at what time you fly to the round table, and empty bottles of champagne. Is not that hour midnight ? And yet midnight, say the poets, is the hour of crimes and hobgoblins. Fie, fie, Charles ; I bet you are only in such a hurry to get rid of me this evening to go to some supper-party."

"You are right, madam ; I *am* going to a supper-party."

"And you dare acknowledge it ? And you dare admit to my very face, that you prefer a supper-party to my company. Ah, then, for the future I too shall hate the hour of midnight. But how I would bless,

how I would cherish the hour, when, abandoning for my sake the follies and vanities of a world for which you were never made, bidding farewell to the frivolous, dissipated companions of your lighter hours, you would cast yourself at my feet, and, as in days of yore, shed tears on my hand, vow that I was your world, and that death, instant death should be your portion unless I smiled upon your love. That hour I would indeed bless and cherish, Charles; that, to me, would be the hour of unutterable happiness."

"Henrietta, dearest, loveliest, forgive me. I knew not what I said. Midnight is in truth a happy, a joyful hour. I must have been mad, more than mad. What! dream of the morning, the afternoon, when midnight, dear midnight, was before me? What! hope to woo you — win you, in the very midst of your adorers, your never-ceasing engagements? I was indeed mad. Withdraw not that lily hand, my own bright-eyed love. This very night, Henrietta, did I mean to terminate my wretched existence. Even now my pistols are loaded; they await me."

"Let them wait, Charles, let them wait. Do you think I would abet murder?"

And Charles staid; and swiftly did the hours glide away, while the viscount listened to the blushing confessions of Henrietta's love, and her dread of Matilda's censure.

When Marguerite sought her lady in the morning, she found the lovers still *tête-à-tête* on the sofa, busied in framing a letter of excuse to the countess's fellow-hermit. Her waiting-maid held a letter in her hand, which she presented to her mistress, who crimsoned to the very temples when she recognized the hand-writing of Matilda.

But alas, alas! we live in a world of dreams and illusions; we live in a world where truth is

but a transient guest, where man lingers but an instant, and where every day offers but a contradiction to its predecessor. The first page of Matilda's letter was filled with dark, philosophical reflections; the next was wet with tears; and in the third page she implored the countess's pardon, but assured her the plan of the Hermitage was a perfect absurdity, and could not be carried into execution; because, on the very next Sunday, a young and intelligent lawyer, in their neighborhood, was to lead her to the hymeneal altar. Alas, alas! women were, are, will be, fickle.

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## LOVE IN THE OLDEN TIME.

THE Lady Eveleyn Seton, of Seton Manor, was young, beautiful, rich, and an orphan. Too young to join in the gay revels of a court, she was still immured within her ancient halls, under the watchful eye of her aunt the Lady, Alice; and though retired from the society of the age in which they lived, many were the suitors aspiring to the hand of the fair Eveleyn. One alone appeared slightly favored: he was the young Sir Hugh de Gasconville, the most finished courtier and accomplished knight under the banners of Richard Cœur de Lion; but Lady Eveleyn was fickle — she inherited all the pride of the Setons, and took more delight in gazing at the grim array of her warrior ancestors in the gallery of family portraits, than in listening to the courtly phrases and laughing tones of Sir Hugh.

"I would I could win thy love, fair Lady Eveleyn," said the knight, one day, as they paced the gallery to-

gether, (Lady Alice acting propriety in the distance.) "Three years have I wooed thee, yet still thou art unrelenting: bid me serve thee; bid me perform a task, any thing to win thee."

"Nay," replied Eveleyn, "I impose no tasks—I doubt thee not; and yet—'twere well to try thee, methinks—look round thee, Sir Hugh; look at my soldier ancestors, all of whom were great in arms and famed for deeds of prowess: thinkest thou that the last of the Setons would wed with a—a—a stripling knight, whose sword has never left its scabbard—whose brow has never faced a battle—whose arm, perchance, might fail before—"

"Stop, lady," said Sir Hugh, indignantly. "I hear, I understand thee; thou shalt see that Hugh de Gasconville owns no craven heart; I thought not, with these high feelings of thine own, thou wouldst have kept me so long tamely captive in thy train!"

"Silence, Sir Hugh," exclaimed Eveleyn, in her turn roused; "thou art forgetting thyself; we would be alone."

She waved her hand—it was enough. The knight bowed low, and springing on his horse, dashed furiously past the windows, and was out of sight.

The flower of the French nobility were enjoying the gayest tournament that "la belle France" had ever witnessed, when an unknown knight entered the lists and challenged the victor of the day to single combat. He was tall, slightly made, well armed, and well mounted; and a murmur of astonishment went round as he bent his plumed head before the royal canopy; but the murmur rose to a prolonged shout of approbation when the lance of the stranger rang on the breast of his opponent, and hurled him to the ground.

After assisting the fallen knight to rise, the stranger advanced slowly and gracefully towards the plat-



form from whence the prize was presented, and receiving on the point of his lance the chaplet and scarf, with a low obeisance he turned, and was gone before the vanquished had time to recover his seat or his senses. Who could the stranger knight be, save Sir Hugh de Gasconville?

When the drawbridge of Seton Manor was lowered for Sir Hugh, and the stately turrets burst on his sight, a thrill of fearful expectation curled through his veins. The pink and silver scarf of France floated on his shoulder, and the chaplet of pale roses, now withered, hung on his arm as he reined in his charger at the gate, and dismounting, paced through the vestibule, which opened into the withdrawing rooms. He heard Lady Eveleyn's voice, and the knight paused. Three weeks had passed since he left those rooms in anger; and remembering his parting scene, he dreaded the reception he might meet. Suddenly he entered, and on his bended knee, laid the trophies at Lady Eveleyn's feet.

"So, Sir Hugh!" exclaimed the beauty, with the faintest blush in the world, "thou art returned — whither hast thou been? The Lady Alice thought that thou hadst forgotten the road to Seton Manor."

"And *thou*, Eveleyn," said the knight, "didst *thou* not think of me?"

"In truth, I seldom think, since thinking spoils the countenance; but whither hast thou been, and what are these — the chaplet and the scarf?"

"Ladye Love, I have journeyed to France, and these are the trophies won by my poor arm at its latest tournament."

"And wherefore hast thou laid them at my feet, Sir Hugh?"

"To win a boon," whispered De Gasconville.

"What wouldst thou?" said the lady, coloring deeply; "what is the boon?"

"Eveleyn! hast thou so soon forgotten?"

"Are the ladies of France fair, Sir Hugh?"

"I saw them not, seeing only thee before mine eyes, lady."

"Thou hast learnt courtesy," smiled Eveleyn; "but tell me, didst thou break a lance or lose a charger — or — or — gain a wound in this same tournament?"

"Nay, lady; but I unhorsed a bold crusader."

Lady Eveleyn curled her lip. "Methinks, Sir Hugh, that were mere sport, since not a drop of thy brave blood was spilt."

Sir Hugh started. The lady continued — "Methinks, likewise, that a faded chaplet and a worn scarf were unsightly gifts for thy Ladye Love! — No, no, Sir Knight; when Eveleyn Seton weds, it must be with one worthy of her hand; when Seton Manor owns a master, it must be one who will not disgrace its ancient halls!"

"Eveleyn!" exclaimed the knight, grasping his sword, "I know thee not in this strange mood — it is enough — when I am gone, think on thy words — no longer shall Hugh de Gasconville disgrace thine ancient halls! I have loved thee, Eveleyn, but for thyself alone! I have wooed thee, but not for thy gold!"

"Nay, Hugh, dear Hugh, thou art too serious; I but meant —"

"It matters not now, lady; thy words are traced in fire on my heart; not because *thy* loved lips pronounced them, but because others heard thee scorn me; the day may come when I may be worthy of thee — till then, Eveleyn, farewell!"

"Nay, stop! one word!" cried Eveleyn; but she was too late: ere the tears could burst from her eyes, Sir Hugh de Gasconville and his good charger were skirting the distant hills; ere another moment could fly, he was lost to her sight; and sinking on her seat,

the Lady Eveleyn Seton exclaimed, in the bitterness of repentance, "He is gone, and I have lost the truest heart that ever knight proffered to Ladye Love!"

The Christian army, under Cœur de Lion, set out for the Holy Land, and amongst their glittering numbers appeared Sir Hugh de Gasconville. It were vain to repeat the trials and hardships they endured; it is enough that, after a few years of toil, the few who escaped with their lives returned to their native land; and of them was reckoned Sir Hugh; but he was changed. The tall, proud youth was covered with wounds, worn, subdued, ill, and melancholy; yet his first thought was of Eveleyn Seton. He faltered in asking after her whom he loved; but a wild sensation of mingled pleasure and pain awoke in his breast on finding that she was still alive, well, and Eveleyn Seton.

His determination was taken; he would see her once more; and just as the summer's sun set behind the Yorkshire Hills, Sir Hugh de Gasconville rang the great bell of Seton Manor.

He found Eveleyn surrounded by her attendants.

"Thou art a soldier and a crusader," said she, bending; "and thou art welcome to our castle; but who art thou?"

"Lady," began Sir Hugh.

"Ah!" shrieked Eveleyn, "I know thee! Hugh! dear Hugh, welcome, welcome home!"

"It is I indeed, lady, but sadly, sorely changed; I cannot kneel to thee now; I may not offer thee the strength of this arm, for it is helpless; I cannot stand before thee without the stay of my good lance; yet would I see thee once again. May I speak with thee alone?"

"Eveleyn," said the knight, as he lifted his plumed helmet off, "thou seest me!"

"I hear thee, Hugh; it is enough!"

“Nay, raise thine eyes; thou seest but the wreck of Hugh de Gasconville; and conscious that, though his hand has been soaked in the blood of the enemy, and though lances have been broken and sabres bent on his body, I am still unworthy of thee, I come, faint, wounded, and disabled, to bid thee a long, last farewell!”

“Then thou lovest me no longer, Hugh!” cried Eveleyn.

“Better than life,” replied the knight; “yet thinkest thou I am one to win woman’s love?”

“Yes!” exclaimed Eveleyn, throwing her arm round the lance on which he leant; “say no more; I am still thine in heart. Though thou art wounded, ’twas in a noble cause. Thou hast fought long and bravely. Though disabled, thou art not dishonored. In future this arm shall be thy stay, and if thou wilt, Hugh, mine own Hugh, this hand shall be thy well-won prize!”

“Won, won!” murmured the now exhausted Sir Hugh, “and lost, lost, as soon as won.”

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## THE MUFFLED PRIEST.

THE aisles of the chapel, lately thronged with many worshippers, were silent. The sounds of prayer which had echoed through the groined roof, were hushed. The assembly which had knelt in solemn, but erroneous devotion, had disappeared; and the stone image—the senseless object of their adoration—smiled grimly in the gloomy loneliness, as his chis-

eled features displayed themselves in the temple erected by superstitious wealth to his service.

But one individual remained, — a long robe of sombre hue concealed his person, — who leaned, as if in deep thought, against the pedestal on which stood the deity. He was the priest.

A long shadow was cast on the floor, and instantly afterward a tall, gaunt figure appeared at the door. A mantle of spotless white overhung his shoulders, scarcely concealing his broad and ample chest. The erectness of his carriage, the dignity of his attitude, the fire of his eye, the boldness of his step, and the proud curl upon his lip, proclaimed him to be a man of ambition.

A contemptuous sneer played upon his countenance as he cast his eyes about the sanctuary; he glanced toward the stern deity itself, as its deformed features seemed to assume an expression of indignation at the audacity of the intruder. The stranger then turned toward the altar, on which, in a golden vase richly studded with jewels, burned an offering of frankincense, emitting a pale blue smoke, which rose and festooned from pillar to pillar, disseminating its perfume through the adjacent space. None of these, however, seemed to produce either awe or respect in the mind of the Roman; for, striding past the shrine, he cried —

“Priest! dost sleep?”

The individual whom he addressed slowly turned his head, muttered, “’Tis he!” then, drawing his robe more closely about him, answered —

“No, I sleep not. The priest of this deity is not as other men; he needs no sleep.”

“Cease this folly,” cried the senator impatiently; “well I know all tricks and juggles of thy craft; save thy precious trash to dose the vulgar; re-

serve thy lectures for the fools who kneel to this thing of stone ! ”

“ Beware ! rash man,” returned the priest, “ how, in the sanctity of this house, you brave his vengeance : what thou think’st stone may possess power to strike terror to even thy stubborn heart.”

“ Forbear this idle talk ! ” exclaimed the other.

“ Idle talk ! ” repeated the priest, with deep solemnity of manner ; “ obdurate as thou art, this deity, through me, can disclose that would make thee tremble ! ”

“ I would fain witness the skill of which thou vauntest,” said the senator, in a more serious manner ; for he was unconsciously imbibing a portion of the awe which pervaded the place.

“ Thou shalt be gratified,” remarked the priest : “ what I now tell, thou think’st buried in thine own bosom, unknown by others : if I disclose it to thee, doubt not that he who presides here can read the hearts of all who approach him, whether to worship or to scoff.”

“ Proceed, proceed ! ” cried the other.

“ Twenty years since, Armenius, thou wert a general, the commander of a legion — ”

“ Well done for the omniscience of thy god ! ” cried the Roman, jeeringly. “ My many triumphs have chronicled the truth of thy remarks in the archives of the republic. Is this thy wonder ? ”

“ Interrupt me not,” answered the priest, calmly ; “ when I finish, speak what words thou’st mind ; till then, listen. — Twenty years since, when thou wert a general, thou hadst a friend — ha ! start’st thou now ? Twenty years since, I, too, had a friend ; but I do not tremble. Thy friend loved thee, served thee, and shared his all with thee. Through his high influence, when accused before the senate, thou



sav'dst thy name, thy honor, and thy life. Although thy junior, thou sought'st him for advice, and using it, didst bind thy brow with the laurels of victory. When surrounded by barbarians, and the pilum, taken from one of thine own band, was hurled at thee, his buckler warded off the well-directed blow. But" — and his manner became more impressive, his voice more melodious — "that friend, alas! loved an Italian girl, soft, pure, and lovely as the sky which arches over her native land. — See, thou start'st again! Did I not tell thee I would make thee tremble? — Yes, he loved the girl, not with the vile feelings which tempted thee to gaze upon her charms, and admire her for them alone. His fondness was for herself, her rich, angelic mind, more than even her dazzling beauty. Treacherously thou strov'st to supplant him in her affections by the splendor of military rank, knowing, as he had confided to thee, that their vows had been exchanged. Thou found'st thy arts useless, and didst change thy love to hatred. The girl became thy friend's wife, when thou, falsely accusing him of crime, didst use thy power to tear him from her arms, sell him into bondage, confiscate his property, and strike his name from the list of citizens. His wife survived her miseries but a year, while thou didst return to the capital loaded with the spoils of the enemy. Yet, with the red-hot hand of guilt grasping thy conscience, and even now, proud and ostentatious before the world, the god tells me in thy chamber thou'rt a coward — starting, in alarm, if the least noise breaks on the midnight."

"Who art thou that dost know all this?" cried the Roman, in evident alarm.

"I am the priest," answered the other, "who can unnerve even the Roman senator!"

A paleness overspread the face of Armenius, as he

looked first on the graven image, and then on his oracle, but, by a violent exertion, resuming his wonted carelessness of demeanor, he said —

“Well, if it is so, let it rest — though ’tis all false, as thou hast said, yet here is a purse; I present it to thy god or thee; I suppose it’s the same thing; I will to-morrow add another. He may be all thou’st represented him; but I believe neither in stocks nor stones — however, I have an object; but first, priest, canst thou keep a secret?”

“Why ask? have I not formerly done so for thee?”

“’Tis true; but this is of more importance.”

“So shall my lips be surer guarded.”

“Priest, I am rich!”

“Thy gifts to me have proved it.”

“I am bountiful!”

“Yonder jewelled vase attests it.”

“Well, then, I will trust thee; serve me well, and I will erect a sanctuary to thy deity the proudest in Rome.”

“My ears are open, and my heart prepared to bury thy words,” said the priest.

“’Tis this,” continued Armenius. “The proud Augustus, our new censor, is about to make himself prince of the senate, and I would thwart him. I have no line of noble ancestors on whom to base my claims; it is superstition must aid me; that thou canst command. Thy temple is the resort of the rich and poor of the city — of the high and the low; by thy aid, and that of yonder stone, my desires may be accomplished; if thou wilt, and I succeed in my designs, I swear to keep my promise.”

The priest consented; when, the two having concerted measures for the furtherance of their scheme, the aspiring senator withdrew; while the priest, drawing aside a veil, entered an inner apartment, and

the shades of night enveloped the capital of the world.

The multitudinous noises of the gay metropolis had subsided, the twilight had passed away, and the moon shone brightly in the cloudless firmament—'twas midnight.

Each pillar reared its graceful capital distinct in the silvery flood which illumined the earth with nearly the brilliancy of sunshine, save where its rays were caught and reflected back by the pale marble which rose, in tasteful intercolumniation, around the princely mansion of Armenius.

One object only gave animation to the scene; and even he appeared scarcely living, for in the darkness of a deep shadow he stood as if transfixed, and made no motion; save now and then the hand, which was laid upon his breast, would contract, as if with nervous action.

Another figure is added to the scene—she glides on tiptoe, and rapidly flies to meet the youth; she throws herself into his arms—his lips meet hers—the sudden transport of delight, the impassioned embrace declares them to be lovers.

Stealing noiselessly into the deeper shade of an adjacent wall, they are concealed from every eye save that of Him who cannot look upon such love, so pure, so fervid, and so disinterested, but with pity on the sad fate which separates them.

"Agricola, love," whispered the maid, "have I lingered too long from thee? Thou wilt forgive me; it was to avoid detection that I tarried."

The youth seized her tapering fingers in his own, and pressed them to his bosom.

"No, love," he cried, pressing her hands to his lips, and bathing them in the sea of agony which was

rushing from his eyes, "no; alas! thou hast not lingered long enough; would that thou hadst never come!"

"Say not so, Agricola. Wherefore dost thou weep thus?" she inquired, soothingly.

"Because," he replied, "this is the last time that we meet, Sylvia; and may I not consecrate it by a tear, as one of fond remembrance?"

"The last, Agricola!" sobbed the tender girl; "O, name it not; we never will part again."

"Alas! what wouldst thou?"

"Live with thee; die with thee; Sylvia would be thy wife."

"No, no!" exclaimed the youth, as the pang of grief darted through his soul; "no, Sylvia, it may not be!"

"Then," said she, reprovingly, "thou dost not love me, or thou wouldst not cast me off."

"Love you!" cried he; "it is that I love too well, to —"

"Then why not listen to my prayer?"

"Alas! it is that I love too deeply!"

"No," cried the girl, "no, Agricola; didst thou love like me, like me adore, thou wouldst cast aside these fears."

"Fears!" repeated the youth, dropping his hand, and flashing a fire from his eye, which illumined the space about them; "fears, Sylvia! thou dost not know me. To me fear is a stranger. 'Tis not that which influences me; but recollect, girl — Agricola is a slave!"

The momentary sternness which he had assumed did not, however, damp the ardor of the girl; it seemed to render him still dearer to her. She placed her fragile arm about his manly neck, and in a tone of gentle reproach, "Rebuke me not, my love," she

said; "thou know'st, if Agricola is a slave, Sylvia would share his bondage. Her love would make his slavery sweeter far than freedom."

"Desist, I pray thee," responded the youth, encircling her waist with his arm, with respectful tenderness, and softening his tone; "remember your father is a Roman!"

"Cruel as thou art, I still will love thee," she whispered through her tears; "none but thee I live or care for. My father's wrath I heed not, so that I possess thee; I care —"

"Hist!" said her lover, as he carefully leaned toward the spot they had just quitted. "When last we met, I heard a noise like that which just struck upon my ear. Sylvia, away!"

"Never," cried the girl, filled with love's desperation, and clinging more closely to him, "never till thou'st promised. I will die with thee, Agricola, but will not lose thee!"

A faint noise resembling a footfall broke on the silence, as Agricola strove to disengage himself from the virgin, who twined her arms wildly about his neck.

"Begone, Sylvia, I beseech!"

"Till you promise, never!" she articulated, nearly choked with emotion.

Again the noise was heard. If they were discovered, ruin would befall the idol of his heart, and he be degraded by the lash. A moment more, it would be too late: he put his lips to her ear.

"I promise."

In the next instant the light form of the maid was lost among the columns, and her lover, looking hastily about, saw the shadow, evidently that of a man, cast on the pavement near him; but so instantaneous was the disappearance that it had vanished ere he was

fully aware of the reality. He kneeled, and placed his ear on the stones; but all was silent, save the short beating of his heart.

The immovable features of the pagan idol were dimly visible in the breaking day that stole through the portico of his temple, while, equally inflexible, the priest sat at his feet, his face hid in the ample folds of his mantle, presenting only the undefined outlines of a man.

As the gray haze of morning yielded to the strengthening dawn, the senator, with a deep frown settled on his brow, walked in, and saluted the priest, who rose to receive him.

"Why here, and so early?" demanded the latter. "I could effect nothing in the short period since we parted yesterday."

"'Tis not for that I sought thee," answered his visitor.

"Then why this visit?" returned the priest.

"For vengeance!"

"Thou shalt have it," replied the priest, gathering his robe about him.

"Thou know'st not what I mean, foolish priest."

"Still thou shalt have vengeance;" and a dry cough, like a death rattle, sounded in the throat of the priest—it might have been a laugh.

"Silence," said the senator, sternly, laying his clinched hand upon the altar; "the new-made laws have deprived us of our innate right to punish our slaves with death; yet I have a slave who must die!"

An involuntary shudder passed over the heathen priest; but he pulled his robe more closely about him, and the start passed unobserved. Armenius continued—



"I have a niece, my brother's daughter. She lives with me, my adopted child. This slave has dared to love her. I could let that pass; but she, the daughter of a free-born son of Rome, forgetting her birth, returns his passion. I heard her swear it to him at the last midnight. That seals his doom, and the slave shall die! Were it not that suspicion resting on me might blight my brilliant hopes, this hand had done the deed; but I am unused to tricks; I leave it to thee; thy trade is craftiness, and thou canst lull suspicion. 'That's but thy fee,' he said, casting a bag of gold upon the altar; 'my reward shall make thee rich!'"

"'Tis well," muttered the priest: "how call'st thou thy slave?"

"Agricola."

The sudden start and half word which escaped the priest caught the other's attention.

"Why start'st thou?" he demanded.

"I started," answered the priest, recovering himself, and stretching forth an arm much withered and shrunken, "because this hand was never dipped in blood."

"A wise priest," said the senator, scornfully. "I see thy object; well, be it so;" and he threw another purse upon the altar.

"Thy words must be my law," said the priest, in a low tone; "but away! the people come to worship."

The senator cast a searching glance on the muffled face of the priest; he drew his robe about him, and, casting a disdainful look on the throng which now commenced kneeling about the image, left the chapel.

When the worshippers had concluded their devotions, they retired; and soon the priest was left alone with one person who still knelt at the altar. The

priest having carefully fastened the doors, the devotee arose, and casting aside the gray mantle which disguised him, exhibited the fine form of Agricola, the slave.

"Father," said he, "I crave thy blessing. Thou hast ever been kind to Agricola; but he is poor, and all that he can return he now presents to thee — the love that springs from his heart."

"'Tis all I ask," cried the priest, casting aside his mantle and embracing him; "the love of the good is the greatest treasure. But, my son, thou hast failed in confidence to me, and dangers beset thy path ranged thicker than the pikes of the Macedonians."

Agricola blushed, and sank his head upon his breast.

"It is true," he replied, "that I have not told thee all; but now —"

"Mind it not now — I know all!" The youth glanced incredulously into his face, when the priest, taking his hand, continued, "Yes, all — thou lov'st thy master's adopted daughter, and she returns thy love. Is it not so?"

"Alas! alas! too rightly hast thou said," answered the young man, despondingly.

"Say not alas!" cried the priest, his eyes brightening with delight; "she shall be thy wife!"

"My wife!" repeated Agricola, retiring a few paces, regarding the other with astonishment, "and I a slave!"

"Fear not! if thou wouldst be happy, obey me. At midnight fly hither with thy bride, and I will unite thee."

"But remember," said the youth, tortured with many conflicting emotions, "the populace will slay thee if thou dost unite a slave to a free-born girl."

"Leave that to me. Obey my instructions. — Now away ! return at midnight."

At the same hour as on the previous morning, Armenius repeated his visit ; but the priest met him at the altar, and, as he was about to speak, said in a bolder tone than he had hitherto used —

"The deity hath spoken of thee !"

"Hast thou punished the slave?" demanded Armenius, eagerly.

"First must I relate the words of the god I serve, then to thy question."

"Be speedy with thy fooleries," said Armenius, haughtily. "I have weighty business to-day, and few moments to spare."

"Last night," said the priest, "the god spoke to his servant, and said, the friend Atticus, whom Armenius exiled, yet lives! — Start not, senator of Rome — Atticus yet lives, and in disguise has returned to Rome, found proof of thy baseness, and received honors from Augustus. He has learned, too, that before her death his wife was delivered of a child; that thou didst seize the infant, and didst bring him up as thy slave, that thou mightst feast thy hellish hate in seeing the son of thy rival eat with thy bondsmen."

"Hast thou ended?" asked his auditor.

"I have," answered the priest.

"Then know thy god or thou speak'st false, for of a surety I know that Atticus is long since dead. Now answer me — hast thou slain the slave?"

"To satisfy thyself how faithfully I have executed my commission," said the priest, "raise yonder veil, and behold his body."

The senator strode in the direction pointed out,

and drawing aside the curtain, beheld Agricola with Sylvia in his arms. He recoiled at first, but in an instant exclaiming —

“Wretch, thou hast deceived me!” unsheathed a jewel-hilted dagger from beneath his robe, and was bounding forward, when the priest caught his arm.

“Hold, murderer!” he cried, “nor dare to shed a freeman’s blood!”

“He is not free. He is my slave,” cried the senator, striving to free himself from the priest, who held him with an iron grasp, while he exclaimed, “’Tis false — he is my son.” Then, casting aside his robe, he discovered his person decked in full senatorial costume, while he added, “And I am Atticus, a Roman senator.” Then, wresting the dagger from his hand, he threw him from him with gigantic strength, crying, “Thy treason has reached the ears of Augustus. Guards, seize the traitor!”

As if by magic, the chapel filled with legionaries, who, tearing his robes from the crest-fallen Armenius, conducted him to a neighboring prison; while the new senator, restored to all his power and estates, with Agricola and his lovely bride, was escorted triumphantly to the palace of Augustus.

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## ISABELLE, HER SISTER KATE, AND THEIR COUSIN.

MISTAKES and misunderstandings are not such bad things, after all, at least not always so; circumstances alter cases.

I remember a case quite in point. Every body in

the county admired Isabelle Edmunds; and in truth she was an admirable creature, just made for admiration, and sonneteering, and falling in love with; and accordingly all the county of — was in love with her. The columns of every Argus, and Herald, and Sentinel, and Gazette, and Spectator, and all manner of newspapers, abounded with the effusions, supplicatory and declaratory, of her worshippers: in short, Miss Isabelle was the object of all the spare “ideality” in all the region round about. Now, I shall not inform my respected readers how she looked; you may just think of a Venus, a Pysche, a Madonna, a fairy, an angel, &c., and you will have a very definite idea on the point. I must run on with my story. I am not about to choose this angel for my heroine, because she is too handsome, and too much like other heroines, for my purpose. But Miss Isabelle had a sister, and I think I shall take her. “Little Kate” — for she was always spoken of in the diminutive — was some years younger than her sister, and somewhat shorter in stature. She had no pretensions to beauty — none at all; yet there was something, a certain — in short, sir, she looked very much like Mrs. A., or Miss G., whom you admire so much, though you always declare she is not handsome.

It requires very peculiar talent to be overlooked with good grace, and in this talent Miss Kate excelled. She was as placid and happy by the side of her brilliant sister, as any little contented star that for ages has twinkled on, unnoticed and almost eclipsed, by the side of the peerless moon. Indeed, the only art or science, in which Kate ever made any proficiency, was the art and science of being happy; and in this she so remarkably excelled,

that one could scarcely be in her presence half an hour without feeling unaccountably comfortable.

She had a world of sprightliness, a deal of simplicity and affection, with a dash of good-natured shrewdness, that, after all, kept you more in awe than you would ever suppose you could be kept, by such a merry, good-natured little nobody. Not one of Isabelle's adorers looked at her with such devout admiration as did the laughter-loving Kate. No one was so ready to run, wait, and tend—to be up stairs, and every where, in ten minutes, when Isabelle was dressing for conquest; in short, she was, as the dedications of books sometimes set forth, her ladyship's most obedient, most devoted servant.

But if I am going to tell you my story, I must not keep you all night looking at pictures; so now to my tale, which I shall commence in manner and form following:—

It came to pass that a certain college valedictorian, and a far-off cousin of the two sisters, came to pass a few months of his free agency at their father's; and, as aforesaid, he had carried off the first college honor, besides the hearts of all the ladies in the front gallery at the commencement.

So interesting! so poetic! such fine eyes, and all that, was the reputation he left with the gentle sex. But alas! poor Edward! what did all this advantage him, so long as he was afflicted with that unutterable, indescribable malady, commonly rendered bashfulness—a worse nullifier than any ever heard of in Carolina? Should you see him in company, you would really suppose him ashamed of his remarkably handsome person and cultivated mind. When he began to speak, you felt tempted to throw open the window and offer him a smelling-bottle, he made



such a distressing affair of it; and as to speaking to a lady, the thing was not to be thought of.

When Kate heard that this "rara avis" was coming to her father's, she was unaccountably interested to see him, of course — because he was her cousin, and because — a dozen other things, too numerous to mention.

He came, and was for one or two days an object of commiseration, as well as admiration, of the whole family circle. After a while, however, he grew quite domestic; entered the room straight forward, instead of stealing in sidewise — talked off whole sentences without stopping — looked Miss Isabelle full in the face without blushing — even tried his skill at stretching patterns, and winding silk — read poetry and played the flute with the ladies — romped and frolicked with the children — and, in short, as old John observed, was "as pleasant as a psalm book from morning till night."

Divers reports began to spread abroad in the neighborhood, and great confusion was heard in the camp of Miss Isabelle's admirers. It was stated, with great precision, how many times they had ridden, walked, talked together, and even all they had said. In short, the whole neighborhood was full of

"That strange knowledge that doth come,  
We know not how — we know not where."

As for Katy, she always gave all admirers to her sister, *ex officio*; but she thought, that of all the men she had ever seen, she should like her cousin Edward best for a brother; and she did hope Isabelle would like him as much as she did; and for some reason or other, her speculations were remarkably drawn to this point; and yet, for some reason or

other, she felt as if she could not ask any questions about it.

At last, events appeared to draw towards a crisis. Edward became more and more "brown studious" every day, and he and Isabelle had divers solitary walks and confabulations, from which they returned with a peculiar solemnity of countenance. Moreover, the quick-sighted little Kate noticed that when Edward was with herself he seemed to talk as though he talked not, while with Isabelle he was all animation and interest; that he was constantly falling into trances and reveries, and broke off the thread of conversation abruptly; and, in short, had every appearance of a person who would be glad to say something, if he only knew how.

"So," said Kate to herself, "they neither of them speak to me about it—I should think they might. Belle I should think would, and Edward knows I am a good friend of his. I know he is thinking of it all the time. He might as well tell me, and he shall."

The next morning Miss Kate was sitting in the little back parlor. Isabelle was gone out shopping, and Edward was—she did not know where. O no, here he is—coming book in hand into the self-same little room. "Now for it," said the merry girl, mentally; "I'll make a charge at him." She looked up. Master Edward was sitting diagonally on the sofa, twirling the leaves of his book in a very unscholarlike manner; he looked out of the window and—then he walked to the sideboard and poured out three tumblers of water; then he drew a chair up to the work-table, and took up first one ball of cotton, looked it all over, and laid it down; then another; then he picked up the scissors, and minced up two or three little bits of paper; and then he began to pull

the needles out of the needle-book, and put them back again.

"Do you wish for some sewing, sir?" said the young lady, after having very composedly superintended these operations.

"How —— ma'am, what!" said he, starting, and upsetting box, stand and all, upon the floor.

"Now, cousin, I'll thank you to pick up that cotton," said Kate, as the confused collegian stood staring at the cotton balls rolling in divers directions. It takes some time to pick up all the things in a lady's work-box; but at last peace was restored, and with it a long pause.

"Well, cousin," said Kate, in about ten minutes, "if *you* can't speak, *I* can; you have something to tell me, you know you have."

"Well, I *know* I have," said the scholar, in a tone of hearty vexation.

"There's no need of being so fierce about it," said the mischievous maiden, "nor of tangling my silk, and picking out my needles, and upsetting my work-box, as preparatory ceremonies."

"There is never any need of being a fool, Kate, and I am vexed that I cannot say" — (*a pause.*)

"Well, sir, you have displayed a reasonable fluency so far: don't you feel as if you could finish? Don't be alarmed; I should like, of all things, to be your confidant."

But Edward did not finish; his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth, and he appeared to be going into convulsions.

"Well, I must finish for you, I suppose," said the young lady; "the short of the matter is, Master Edward, *you are in love*, and have exhibited the phenomena thereof this fortnight. Now, you know I am a friend-

ly little body; so do be tractable, and tell me the rest. Have you said any thing to her about it?"

"To her! to whom?" said Edward, starting.

"Why, Isabelle, to be sure; *it's* she, isn't it?"

"No, Miss Catharine, it's *you*," said the scholar, who, like most bashful persons, could be amazingly explicit when he spoke at all.

Poor little Kate! it was her turn to look at the cotton balls, and exhibit symptoms of scarlet fever; and while she is thinking what to say next, you may read the next piece.

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## THE SPANISH DUCHESS AND THE ORPHAN BOY.

THE duchess of Almeda, who was a creole of the Havanna, was married, at a very early age, to the duke of that name and title. This union was in opposition to the taste of Rita, who had a great predilection for a religious life; but, as her family insisted on her compliance with their wishes, she submitted in silence, and, until the period of her arrival in France, no other feelings than those that were prompted by the sincerest piety had occupied her bosom.

The duke of Almeda was an old gentleman of an infinity of wit, but who had been seduced, as was at that time the case with a great number of his rank, by the false splendor with which the school of the Encyclopedists was surrounded; and, deceived by the principles of universal philanthropy which that mischievous sect announced, he devoted himself, heart

and soul, to the propagation of its doctrines. Participating in that strange but honorable enthusiasm, by which the heads of half the French nobility were at that time distracted in the shadowy regions of an illusive Utopia, he hurried on, as far as lay in his power, the progressive development of those ideas, and that system of philosophy, which subsequently became so fatal to every aristocracy and every throne.

The bitter railleries with which he overwhelmed his wife on the subject of what he termed her superstition, had no influence upon her mind so long as they continued in Spain. The spiritual and secular authority of the church and the clergy was so imposing, and the belief of the people so deeply and firmly rooted; breathing such an atmosphere of piety; surrounded by persons who partook of the sincerity of her conviction; and encountering, wherever she turned, the exterior symbols of her magnificent religion, it was not possible that the purity and integrity of Rita's faith could suffer any attaint or diminution.

But, when she arrived at Versailles, and had lived for some time in the centre of the *fêtes*, elegances, and enjoyments of a polished court, famous for the refinements of its wit, and the exquisite tone of its manners, she became in some degree involved in the vortex of its dissipations; and in the giddy round of its pleasures, the robustness of her religious convictions was in some degree impaired. In addition to this, the religion of France was not at all like the prevalence of the same system in Spain; there were no longer those lofty churches, so glowing and profound, with their glittering shrines of gold and jewelry, which seemed to attract around them all the light of the building, and shone in the surrounding obscurity like an emanation of the light of heaven;

the solemn and majestic chant of the monks was no longer heard in France; and its population, clothed in black or sad-colored vestments, was no longer seen prostrate upon the cold pavement of the aisles, in silence and in gloom, and counting the beads of their rosaries with enthusiastic devotion, and all the unction of religious fervor.

In France, the spirit of religion had been lost sight of, and its genius had become perverted; its ministers and teachers endeavored to dazzle the eyes by the splendor of its worship, instead of the simplicity of its truths; the churches were magnificently adorned with gaudy trappings, but they had almost all lost, by neglect or decay, those beautiful painted windows, through which the beams of the sun penetrated like the mild and softened rays of a rainbow; the mass was only frequented to see and to be seen; the sun threw its laughing beams through large and lofty windows, deluging the interior of the churches with a flood of light, and, dancing upon the profuse decorations of velvet, and gold, and silk, flung their painted reflections upon a noisy, gay, and laughing congregation, the luxury of whose dresses eclipsed the splendor of the altars; philosophy had banished religion from the pulpit, and the sacred mysteries were solemnized amid sneers and ill-suppressed sarcasms; and, to crown the whole, the psalms and anthems were sung by the girls of the opera.

Moreover — and it must be avowed — her principles were acquired rather than instinctive, the result of chance and accident rather than conviction and reason. She was endowed with a quick, fertile, and ardent imagination, which had been inflamed by the pompous exterior of Catholicism, and its grave and majestic ceremonies; and having never yet suffered, or had occasion to require the consolations of religion,



she had never listened to the solemn and whispering echoes of that vast abyss in which the profound soul of Pascal had been plunged. She had experienced nothing of religion but its poetry. Of the unfathomable ocean of faith, she perceived nothing but the laughing, fresh, and sparkling wave which gamboled on its expanse ; and her soul was enraptured while her senses were intoxicated by the inspiring perfume of the incense, and the distant, solemn, and murmured melody of the deep-toned organ.

And so, when the philosophers who composed the society of her husband had laid siege to her spiritualized faith with their cold logic and dry, algebraical reasoning, Rita was incapable of reply or argument. They reasoned by mathematical figures, and with mathematical precision, while she could only talk enthusiasm and ecstasy ; when she quoted the miracles and wonders by which Christianity had been illustrated, and its authenticity established, they opposed her fervor with the unchangeable laws of nature and astronomy : on whatever side she turned, she encountered nothing but cold and heartless reasoning, or withering sarcasm, — and she held her peace, frightened and distressed ; for the apparent clearness of certain objections, although they could not entirely convince her, or utterly persuade her of the hollowness of that system to which she had clung, had the effect of shaking her conviction, and alarming her with its possible and probable impositions. Then, becoming conscious, as if by instinct, of all the happiness and comfort she was in danger of being deprived of, she wished to take refuge in her former confident and undoubted belief ; but the time had passed, never to be recalled ; the cruel and brutal demon of the spirit of analysis had stained with his withering breath her ravishing visions of azure skies and smiling

heavens, peopled with angels with rainbow wings, and breathing with music and melody which found an echo in the softened heart; all had disappeared, like the visions of first and only love!

All this may be easily conceived: a person of a strong and powerful mind, or of a proved, strengthened, and confirmed religious faith, can contend advantageously, and even impress his antagonists with his own hallowed and earnest conviction, and elevate them within his own sphere of belief, by the spell of a seducing and persuasive eloquence; but Rita was quite powerless with the adversaries she encountered, as there was no depth in her animated mind, which was carried along by impulse, and as she had attached herself to the poetry of religion quite as much as to its doctrine and maxims. At length her mind was tired out, and more particularly as she appeared always to be in the wrong in every argument; her self-love was irritated by finding her confused but earnest convictions opposed by captious but subtle reasoning, and she ended by doubting of every thing and of herself. From doubt to incredulity there is but one step; the step was taken, and Rita became a professed wit and freethinker.

Incredulity must necessarily make a deep impression upon an organization so susceptible as that of Rita. In fact, on the first glance, there is a fatal attraction, a sort of fascination, in the contest against the Deity; there is a species of wild and fierce poetry in the revolt of the rebel angel; there is audacity in blasphemy, when Jupiter retorts with a thunderbolt. But in analyzing the atheism of the eighteenth century, which so clamorously pronounced its pitiful pretensions, we are struck with its meanness and cowardly character; for those who professed it, believed in a state of utter annihilation after death,

and they had nothing to fear from the offended laws during their lives. They could therefore blaspheme in perfect safety, and had not even the equivocal merit of being martyrs to blasphemy and impiety. As the Divinity did not accept the challenge which was tacitly offered by Rita, her state of hesitation and doubt did not continue long; indifference took its place; and at length it happened that the duchess of Almeda looked upon Heaven with no emotions either of fear or love. If I dwell at more than usual length upon this incident of Rita's existence, it is because from this period her life assumed a different aspect, and took another coloring. For her ardent and passionate imagination, which had hitherto fed upon the aliment afforded by the thoughts of infinity and eternity, which open an immeasurable career for vivid minds to expatiate in, had soon exhausted what it had received in exchange for the belief which had been destroyed, and was compelled to fall back upon its own natural resources, or to waste away and consume by its own fire.

Hitherto Rita had escaped the influence of earthly passions; but now, if her burning soul, fallen from so high a flight, wished to indulge in the emotions of joy or anguish, they could only be found or felt in love; for love is religion, and has its faith and creed; and in Rita's case it was more particularly so; for if she had given herself up to the passion, she would have loved with an utter and absolute surrender of self, with a fierce and implacable jealousy, which would have devoted to love what she would have otherwise sacrificed to Heaven—rank, fortune, and country. But they did not love in France, at that time, after this fashion; and so it happened that Rita did not find any one worthy to excite in her heart such a passion, and she remained unscathed in the

general dissoluteness of manners and principles, and lived an exemplary model of every female excellence, until the sudden death of the Duke d'Almeda left her at liberty, a young widow, and with an immense fortune. Although she did not regret the duke very much, yet she paid the customary respect to his memory, and passed the period allotted for mourning in the country. Since her residence in France, Rita had never been so isolated from society, and in such utter solitude, as now; and it was now that she regretted her former happy state of undoubting and intense faith; but that was gone, and its departed influence was irrevocable; and the duchess, wearied and chagrined, dragged on the dull and melancholy hours, her ardent soul longing for some emotion to occupy her feelings, suffering from an unknown pain, and longing for an unknown happiness. Her health became affected; she grew thin, and her cheeks were stained and wrinkled by the channels of involuntary tears; without aid, consolation, or refuge against these painful sorrows, and the nervous excitement which preyed upon and fevered her, the thought of an early death was the only pleasing idea which visited her solitude, and she sometimes even thought of hastening its approach; but whether her courage failed her, or a secret presentiment withheld her, she continued to linger in this unhappy state, until the hour when a singular chance introduced Henri to her notice.

One of her female attendants came to her one day with the information that some fishermen, who had taken shelter from a storm in a ruined tower on the coast, had discovered a young man of extraordinary beauty, who was nearly expiring from exhaustion; and that, knowing the humanity of the duchess, they had come to the castle for assistance in reviving him.

This account made an impression upon the romantic mind of the duchess, and, on the same day, she bent her steps to the tower of Koatven, accompanied by a domestic. Then, for the first time, she saw Henri. Interested by the mild and saddened expression of the lad's beautiful and noble features, Rita explained to him, with emotion, the object of her visit; and that, having understood that her cares and attentions would be serviceable to him, she had come in person to tender them.

Henri thanked her warmly and gratefully, but added, that he should have no occasion to be a burden to her. His history was a simple one. He was an orphan, and had been brought up by his uncle, an aged ecclesiastic, and had never quitted him, until he had been torn from him by death. Left alone in the world, without fortune, friends, or interest, Henri had determined to follow a vocation to which he had thought himself called — that of the cloister. Nevertheless, before coming to an irrevocable decision upon this matter, and in order to ascertain whether he could fitly support the solitude, fasting, austerities, and privations of the monastic life, he had determined to make the tower his place of retirement for some little time. But his strength had failed him; he had fallen sick; the old servant, who attended him, had abandoned him when he could no longer pay him for his services; and had it not been for the unexpected visit of the fishermen, he must have perished unknown. He concluded his narrative by saying, "It is of little matter now, for I feel that my life is departing; and soon, poor orphan as I am, I shall go to rejoin, in heaven, my mother, whom I never knew on earth."

The melancholy resignation, abandonment, and misfortune, by which the lad was crushed, and his

ingenuous countenance, touched the heart of the duchess, and she instantly felt a profound pity for, and a strong interest in, one so unfortunate. From this period, a new existence commenced for Rita; by a strange contradiction, the haughty duchess, who had resisted and repulsed the homage of the noble and the elevated, felt an unknown sensation inspiring her at the sight of this being, so unhappy and so destitute. Hitherto the most elegant trifling, the most distinguished manners, and the most graceful impertinence, of the flutterers of the gay world, had never arrested the passing glance of Rita; but the sad and pale face of Henri remained engraven on her heart; those features which she had never beheld but once, seemed to haunt her wherever she went, and that soft and timorous voice was constantly thrilling in her soul.

Rita was so happy in this newly-discovered sensation, that she did not dream of resisting its progress. Freed from all ties and connections, immensely rich, and her own mistress, what obstacle was there to prevent her devoting herself to Henri? And, on his side, alone, isolated, without parents, family, or friends, would he not be hers, and hers only? would he not be dependent upon her? would he not hold every thing from her? and then would she not be the only being that loved him? for so she understood love. Yes, Rita would have been jealous of Henri's mother or sister, if he had owned such relations; for love, in Rita's bosom, was egotism in its purest sense, fierce, exacting, and exclusive. The more she knew Henri, the more she loved him. She spent whole hours in listening to the outpouring of his artless and candid soul, and delighted in the consciousness that she was feeling the same emotions which she excited in her *protégé*; for she was as much a novice as he in the



symbols and symptoms of the delicious passion; so that an exchange was established between them of the ravishing details of each new discovery which they made of the influence of passionate tenderness in their own hearts, and by which they divined what was passing in the other's.

And then the boy was so timid, so bashful; and, as he never exacted the soft tribute of the lip, it would have been ungenerous not to make a free and unreserved surrender of its treasures. And so at length a deep, burning, and concentrated passion took possession of the heart and soul of the duchess. At her age, the development of such a feeling is impetuous and uncontrollable. Every consideration was postponed to the happiness of calling the boy her own. Her determination to effect this was invincible and unshaken: regardless of her rank and fortune, and forgetful of, or despising, her social position, she decided upon offering her hand to Henri, who, in one of his conversations, had avowed himself the offspring of a noble, though impoverished family of Bretagne.

"Of what consequence is his fortune to me?" said Rita; "is he not noble? Moreover, as I am the only child of a grandee of Castile, can I not endow him with the name and title of my sire? I will do so; for he shall hold every thing that he has from me; every thing, even his name: that name which he will worthily bear, and gallantly illustrate! For my Henri is beautiful, brave, and talented; and I never yet saw a gentleman who could be compared to him! And then, he loves me so! O, he loves me to adoration. I feel it here—in my heart! I love him too well for it to be otherwise. And has he not sacrificed to me all that he could possibly surrender in this world?—the faith which he had sworn, the pure and calm future which he dreamed. And who

knows," said Rita, with apprehension, "who can tell that he has not sacrificed his happiness to me?"

At last, the three days which she had required Henri to reflect upon her proposition, found her, if it was possible, still more determined and resolute in her will. On the evening of the third day, she took her cloak, and leaving the castle by her oratory, which communicated with the chapel by a narrow passage, she leaned upon the arm of one of her esquires, and walked to the sea-side; when she had reached a large rock, she ordered the domestic to await her return, and entered the tower.

Henri was in attendance at the gate, standing on a sort of terrace, which served as a foundation for the staircase; but he was dressed in such a manner that Rita did not at first recognize him, and she stood surprised and motionless. He was almost entirely enveloped in a monk's habit; and his cowl, drawn over his head, nearly concealed his features.

"Rita! Rita!—it is I!" said he, in his gentle tones. He had hardly pronounced the first syllable of her name, ere the duchess, recognizing her lover, had flung herself into his arms.

"But, Henri, why assume this sad costume?"

"Was it not that which I was doomed to assume before I knew you, my Rita? I wished to clothe myself in it for a first, a last, and only time, in order to make to you a more total, ample, and unreserved sacrifice! Are you offended at me?"

"No, no; but come," said Rita, rushing up the staircase.

Henri gently held her back. "Listen," he murmured, while he pressed the lips of Rita against his own. "I have a fancy to be alone in my apartment above to receive you, and fitly to do the honors of my hermitage. I wish once more to long and to listen

for the welcome sound of your footsteps, and the rustling of your dress. Will you permit me?"

"Yes, yes; but let me tell you," interrupted Rita with joyous precipitation, so eager was she to confide her cherished and darling secret to her lover—"let me tell you, Henri, I am come to offer you my hand!—my hand, with an immense fortune and a title!—such a glittering, dazzling title, as German electors might envy; and it is all for you, and myself with it! and, O, how gladly do I surrender all to one who—"

"Angelic creature!" said Henri, kissing her bright and marble brow; "I will be with you instantly." And so saying, he disappeared in the dark recesses of the tower. A minute afterward, Rita stood at the door, which no darkness could prevent her finding. She threw it open, and uttered a shriek of astonishment, almost of terror.

Rita's surprise was very natural; for no one could have recognized the obscure and wretched chamber of the tower of Koatven. Its damp walls, blackened by time, were covered with magnificent draperies of purple velvet, whose ample folds seemed to diminish the proportions of the apartment at least one half. There was, besides, a profusion of golden candlesticks, of gilded furniture, of Venetian mirrors, reflecting the light of a thousand wax tapers, which made this circular room seem a concentration of light and splendor. And the timid and melancholy Henri was metamorphosed into a graceful, accomplished, and confident gentleman, who glided over the rich carpets to offer his hand to the duchess, to conduct her to an arm-chair, near a table magnificently prepared, whose equipage was of the richest china, enamelled with vermilion-colored figures of flowers, and whose drinking goblets were of crystal, so thin and pellucid that the juncture of the lips was almost felt

through them. Yes, it was Henri himself; only, instead of his monastic habit, which he had most likely assumed to conceal his costume, it was Henri magnificently arrayed in a coat of blue velvet embroidered with gold, and with a waistcoat of cloth of silver! It was Henri glittering in the rays of the rose diamonds, which flashed through the rich and elaborately-worked lace of his ruffles, which blazed upon his garters, on the buckles of his red-heeled shoes, and on the hilt of his sword. It was Henri, who wore with perfect ease, and as if he had been always accustomed to it, the costume of a polished nobleman, adorned with the orders of Malta and of St. Louis, and over which waved gracefully, with every motion, the large shoulder-knots of white satin, studded with silver, the distinctive emblem that the wearer was in the military household of the royal Bourbon of France.

But, alas! the countenance of Henri bore no longer that soft expression of sadness and of suffering which had such a melting charm for Rita's heart. His features were now smiling and animated; his glances, which the duchess had never yet encountered in their full force, and which had been always hitherto downcast and veiled by his long eyelashes, were now flushed with gayety and exultation; and the cloud of white and perfumed powder, which was thickly sprinkled over his rich tresses, doubled the expressive power of his black and deeply piercing eyes.

"Am I asleep or awake?" said the duchess, trembling, and overcome by a feeling of apprehension and grief which she could not conceal.

"Madame the duchess shall have every thing explained to her," was the respectful response of Henri, assuming the exquisite politeness of the day, which

did not allow of a lady's being addressed but in the third person.

Rita threw herself into an arm-chair. "Explain! in the name of Heaven, sir, explain the meaning of all this!"

"In the first place," rejoined he, "will madame the duchess allow me to inquire whether she has ever heard speak of the Comte de Vaudrey?"

"Frequently, sir, when I was in the habit of going to the court of Versailles."

"Then, madame the duchess will learn, perhaps with some astonishment, that the Comte de Vaudrey has now the honor of addressing her."

"You, sir — you, Henri — but then — good Heaven! — but what signifies? But the Comte de Vaudrey, I was told, was in the navy, and served in America — it is impossible — for pity's sake, Henri, solve me this mystery."

"It is very true, madame the duchess, that I did serve in America, under the orders of Admiral de Guichen; but after two years' cruising, I returned to France, where I have now been nearly two months."

"Then, monsieur the count," exclaimed Rita, with impetuosity, and rising hastily from her chair, "what is your motive for thus disguising yourself? I cannot comprehend it. I am giddy. Have mercy, Henri, upon a confiding and affectionate woman."

"If madame the duchess will condescend to listen," said Henri, while, with the most exquisite attention, he assisted her to reseal herself, "she shall know every thing."

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Happy in her husband, her station, and in the numerous blessings which flow from the proper and judicious administration of a large fortune, the Duchess d'Almeda recovered that peace of mind which arises

from a conscientious discharge of the duties of life, and in which the days pass undisturbed, and the nights are tranquil and refreshing. With these returned the original pious dispositions of her soul, which had been suppressed rather than extinguished, and which would never have been disturbed, had it not been for the artful insinuations and dexterous sophistry of the leaders of that wretched philosophy, by the principles of which the peace of Europe was wrecked for so long a period. To a susceptible heart, and an ardent temperament, a correct understanding of religious matters is more necessary than to others; and in this the Duchess d'Almeda cordially concurred, when she reflected with terror upon the dangers to which her youth would have been exposed, had the Comte de Vaudrey been other than a gentleman and a man of honor.

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## SNOW-STORM IN SCOTLAND.

\* \* \* A TALE of Truth and Tears, long forgotten, comes across our heart—long forgotten, though on the eve of that day on which the deliverance happened, so passionately did we all regard it, that we felt that interference providential; as if we had indeed seen the hand of God stretched down through the mist and snow from heaven! We all said that it would never, all our lives, desert our memory. But all of us forgot it. But now, while the tempest howls, it seems again but of yesterday!

One family lived in Glencreran, and another in Glenco—the families of two brothers; seldom vis-



iting each other on working days, for their sheep mingled not together on the hill; seldom meeting even on Sabbaths, for theirs was not the same parish-kirk; and seldom coming together on rural festivals or holidays, for in the Highlands, now, these are not so frequent as of yore; yet all these sweet seldoms, taken together, to loving hearts made a happy many; and thus, though each family passed its life in its own homefelt wilderness, there were many invisible threads stretched out through the intermediate air, connecting the two dwellings together, even as the dew-gemmed gossamer keeps floating from one tree to another, each with its own secret nest. And nest-like both dwellings were. *That* in Glenco, built beneath a treeless but high-beathed rock; lownd in all storms; with greensward and garden on a slope down to that rivulet, clearest of the clear, (O! once wofully reddened!) and *growing*—as it seems in the mosses of its own roof, and the huge stones that overshadow it—out of, and belonging to, the solid earth. *That* in Glencreran, more conspicuous, on a knoll among the pastoral meadows, midway between mountain and mountain, so that the grove which shelters it, except when the sun is shining in his meridian tower, is darkened by both their shadows, and dark, indeed, even in the sunshine; for 'tis a low but wide-armed grove of the oak-like pines. A little farther down, and Glencreran is truly “a sylvan scene” indeed; but this dwelling is the highest up of all—the first you descend upon, near the foot of that wild hanging staircase now between you and Glen-Etive; and except this old oak-like grove of pines, there is not a tree, and hardly a bush, on bank or brae, pasture or hay-field, though they are kept, by many a rill, there mingling themselves into one stream, in a perpetual green lustre that seemeth “un-

borrowed from the sun," and to be as native to the grass as its light is to the glow-worm. Such are the two huts; for they are huts, and no more; and you may see them still, if you know how to discover the beautiful sights of nature from descriptions treasured in your heart; and if the spirit of change, now nowhere at rest on the earth, not even in its most solitary places, have not swept violently from the scenes they beautified, the humble and hereditary dwellings that ought to be allowed, in the fulness of the quiet time, to relapse back into the bosom of nature, through insensible and unperceived decay.

These huts belonged to brothers; and each had an only child, a son and a daughter, born on the same day, and now blooming on the verge of youth. A year ago, and they were but mere children; but what wondrous growth of spirit and of the spirit's frame does nature, at that season of life, often present before our eyes, so that we almost see the very change going on between morn and morn, and feel that these objects of our affection are daily brought closer to ourselves, by their partaking daily more and more in all our most sacred thoughts, in our cares and in our duties, and in knowledge of the sorrows as well as the joys of our common lot! Thus had those cousins grown up before their parents' eyes—Flora Macdonald, a name hallowed of yore, the fairest, and Hamish, the brightest of all the living flowers in Glencreran and Glenco. It was now their sixteenth birthday; and never had a winter sun smiled more serenely over a hush of snow. Flora, it had been agreed on, was to pass that day in Glencreran, and Hamish to meet her among the mountains, that he might bring her down the many precipitous passes to his parents' hut. It was the middle of February, and the snow had lain for weeks, with all its drifts unchanged, so

calm had been the weather, and so continued the frost. At the same hour, known by horologe on the cliff touched by the finger of dawn, the happy creatures left their own glen, and mile after mile of the smooth surface glided away past their feet, almost as the quiet water glides by the little boat that, in favoring breezes, walks merrily along the sea. And soon they met at the trysting-place — a bank of birch-trees, beneath a cliff that takes its name from the Eagles.

On their meeting, seemed not the whole wilderness to their souls and senses suddenly inspired with beauty and with joy? Insects, unheard by them before, hummed and glittered in the air; from tree-roots, where the snow was thin, little flowers, or herbs flower-like, now for the first time were seen looking out as if alive; the trees themselves seemed budding, as if it were already spring; and rare as, in that rocky region, are the birds of song, a faint trill for a moment touched their ear, and the flutter of a wing, telling them that somewhere near there was preparation for a nest. Deep down beneath the snow they listened to the tinkle of rills unreached by the frost; and merry, thought they, was the music of these contented prisoners. Not Summer's self, in its deepest green, so beautiful had ever been to them before, as now the mild white of Winter; and when their eyes were lifted up to heaven, when had they ever seen, before, a sky of such perfect blue, a sun so gentle in its brightness, or altogether a week-day, in any season, so like a Sabbath in its stillness, so like a holiday in its joy? Lovers were they, although as yet they knew it not; for from love only could have come such bliss as now was theirs — a bliss that, while it beautified, they felt came from, and belonged to, the eternal skies.

In that wilderness Flora sang all her old songs to

those wild Gaelic airs that sound like the sighing of winds among fractured cliffs, or the branches of storm-tossed trees, when the subsiding tempest is about to let them rest. Monotonous music! but irresistible over the heart it has once awakened and enthralled, so sincere seems to be the mournfulness it breathes in its simplicity — a mournfulness brooding and feeding forever and ever on the same note that is at once its natural expression and its sweetest aliment, of which the dreaming singer never wearied in her woe, while her heart all the time is haunted by all that is most piteous in memory, by the faces of the dead in their paleness returning to the shades of mortality, only that once more they may pour from their fixed eyes those strange showers of unaccountable tears!

How merry were they between those mournful airs! O, how Flora trembled to see her lover's burning brow and flashing eyes, as he told her tales of great battles fought in foreign lands, far, far across the sea — tales which he had drunk in with greedy ears from the old heroes scattered all over Lochaber and Badenoch, on the brink of the grave still garrulous of blood!

“The sun sat high in his meridian tower;”

but time had not been with the youthful lovers, and the blessed beings believed that yet 'twas but a little hour since beneath the Eagle Cliff they had met in the prime of the full-brightened morn!

The boy starts to his feet, and his keen eye looks along the ready rifle; for his sires had all been famous deer-stalkers, and the passion of the chase was hereditary in his blood. Lo! a deer from Dalness, dog-driven, or sullenly astray, slowly bearing his an-

tlers up the glen, then stopping for a moment to snuff the air, and then like lightning away — away! The rifle-shot rings dully from the scarce echoing snow-cliffs, and the animal leaps aloft, struck by a mortal but not sudden death-wound. O for Fingal now to pull him down like a wolf! But laboring and lumbering heavily along, the snow spotted, as he bounds, with blood, the huge animal at last disappears round some rocks at the head of the glen. “Follow me, Flora!” the boy-hunter cries; and flinging down their plaids, they turn their bright faces to the mountain, and away up the long glen after the stricken deer. Fleet was the mountain-girl as an Oread; and Hamish, as he ever and anon looked back to wave her on, with pride admired the beauty of her lightsome motion as she bounded along the snow. Redder and redder grew that snow, and more heavily trampled, as they winded round the rocks; and, lo! the deer staggered up the mountain, not half a mile off, and there, standing at bay, as if before his swimming eyes came a vision of Fingal, the terror of the forest, whose howl was known to all the echoes, and quailed the herd while their antlers were yet afar off! “Rest, Flora! rest! while I fly to him with my rifle, and shoot him through the heart!”

Up — up — up far, far, far up the interminable glen that kept winding and winding, round many a jutting promontory, and many a castled cliff, the red deer kept dragging its gore-oozing bulk, sometimes almost within, and then, for some hundreds of yards, beyond rifle-shot, while the boy, maddened by the chase, pressed forwards, now all alone, nor any more looking behind for Flora, who had entirely disappeared; and thus he was hurried on for miles by the whirlwind of passion, till at last he struck the noble quarry, and down sank the antlers in the snow, while



the air was spurned by the convulsive beatings of feet. Then leapt Hamish upon the red deer like a beast of prey, and lifted up a look of triumph to the mountain top.

Where is Flora? Her lover has forgotten her, and he is alone — nor knows it — in the wilderness — he and the red deer — an enormous animal — fast stiffening in the frost of death. Some large flakes of snow are in the air; and they seem to waver and whirl, though, an hour ago, there was not a breath all over the region. Faster they fall, and faster; the flakes are almost as large as leaves; and overhead, whence so suddenly has come that huge yellow cloud? “Flora, where are you? where are you, Flora?” And from the huge hide the boy leaps up, and sees that no Flora is in the glen. But yonder is a moving speck far off upon the snow! ’Tis she — ’tis she; and again Hamish turns his eyes upon the quarry, and the heart of the hunter burns within him like a new-stirred fire. Shrill as the eagle’s cry, disturbed in his eyry, he sends his voice down the glen; and Flora, with cheeks pale and bright by fits, is at last at his side. Panting and speechless she stands, and then dizzily sinks fainting on his breast. Her hair is ruffled by the wind that revives her, and her face all moistened by the snow-flakes, now not falling, but driven; for the day has undergone a dismal change, and all over the skies are now lowering savage symptoms of a fast-coming night-storm.

Bare is poor Flora’s head, and sorely drenched her hair, that an hour or two ago glittered in the sunshine. Her shivering frame misses now the warmth of the plaid which almost no cold can penetrate, and which had kept the vital current flowing freely in many a bitter blast. What would the miserable boy give now for the coverings, lying far away,



which, in his foolish passion, he flung down to chase that fatal deer! "O, Flora! if you would not fear to stay here by yourself, under the protection of God, who surely will not forsake you, soon will I go and come from the place where our plaids are lying; and under the shelter of the deer, we may be able to outlive the hurricane—you wrapt up in them—and folded, O my dearest sister, in my arms!" "I will go with you down the glen, Hamish!" and she left his breast, but, weak as a day-old lamb, tottered, and sank down among the snow. The cold—intense as if the air were ice—had chilled her very heart, after the heat of that long race; and it was manifest that here she must be for the night, to live or to die! And the night seemed already come, so full was the lift of snow; while the glimmer every moment became gloomier, as if the day was expiring long before its time. Howling at a distance down the glen was heard a sea-born tempest from the Linnhe-Loch, where now they both knew the tide was tumbling in, bringing with it sleet and snow-blasts from afar; and from the opposite quarter of the sky an inland tempest was raging to meet it, while every lesser glen had its own uproar; so that on all hands they were environed with death.

"I will go, and, till I return, leave you with God." "Go, Hamish!" and he went and came, as if he had been endowed with the raven's wings!

Miles away, and miles back had he flown, and an hour had not been with his going and his coming; but what a dreary wretchedness, meanwhile, had been hers! She feared that she was dying; that the cold snow-storm was killing her; and that she would never more see Hamish, to say to him a right last farewell. Soon as he was gone, all her courage had died. Alone, she feared death, and wept, and

wept, and wept in the wilderness, thinking how hard it was for one so young thus miserably to die! He came, and her whole being was changed. Folded up in both the plaids, she felt as if she were in heaven. "O, kiss me, kiss me, Hamish; for thy love, great as it is,—or never hadst thou travelled so the long snows for my sake,—is not as my love; and you must never forget me, Hamish, when your poor Flora is dead!"

Religion, with these two young creatures, was as clear as the light of the Sabbath day, and their belief in heaven just the same as in earth. The will of God they thought of just as they thought of their parents' will; and the same was their loving obedience to its decrees. If she was to die, supported now by the presence of her brother, Flora was utterly resigned; if she were to live, her heart imagined to itself the very forms of her worshipping gratitude! But all at once she closed her eyes; spake not, breathed not; and, as the tempest howled and rumbled in the gloom that fell around them like blindness, Hamish almost fell down, thinking that she was dead.

"Wretched sinner that I am! My wicked madness brought her here to die of cold in the snow!" And he smote his heart, and tore his hair, and feared to look up, lest the angry eye of God were looking on him through the storm.

All at once, without speaking a word, Hamish lifted Flora in his arms, and walked away up the glen, here almost narrowed into a pass. Distraction gave him supernatural strength, and her weight seemed that of an infant. Some walls of what had once been a house, he had suddenly remembered, were but a short way off; whether or not they had any roof, he had forgotten; but the thought even of

such shelter seemed a thought of salvation. There it was — a snow-drift at the opening that had once been a door — snow up to the holes once windows; the wood of the roof had been carried off for fuel, and the snow-flakes were falling in, as if they would soon fill up the inside of the ruin. The snow in front was all trampled as if by sheep; and carrying in his burden under the low lintel, lo! the place was filled with a flock that had foreknown the hurricane, and all huddled together, looking on him as on the shepherd come to see how they were faring in the storm.

And a young shepherd he was, with a lamb apparently dying in his arms. All color, all motion, all breath, seemed to be gone; and yet something convinced his heart that she was yet alive. The ruined hut was roofless; but across an angle of the walls, some pine branches had been flung as a sort of shelter for the sheep or cattle that might repair thither in cruel weather; some pine branches left by the woodcutters, who had felled the few trees that once stood at the very head of the glen. Into that corner the snow-drift had not forced its way; and he sat down there with Flora in the cherishing of his embrace, hoping that the warmth of his distracted heart might be felt by her who was as cold as a corpse. The chill air was somewhat softened by the breath of the huddled flock, and the edge of the cutting wind blunted by the stones. It was a place in which it seemed possible that she might revive, miserable as it was, with mire-mixed snow, and almost as cold as one supposes the grave. And she did revive; and under the half-open lids the dim blue appeared to be not yet life-deserted. It was yet but the afternoon, night-like though it was; and he thought, as he breathed upon her lips, that a faint

red returned, and that they felt his kisses poured over them to drive death away.

“O, father, go seek for Hamish, for I dreamt to-night he was perishing in the snow!” “Flora, fear not; God is with us.” “Wild swans, they say, are come to Loch-Phoil; let us go, Hamish, and see them—but no rifle—for why kill creatures said to be so beautiful?” Over them, where they lay, bended down the pine-branch roof, as if it would give way beneath the increasing weight of snow; but there it still hung, though the drift came over their feet, and up to their knees, and seemed stealing upwards to be their shroud. “O, I am overcome with drowsiness, and fain would be allowed to sleep. Who is disturbing me? and what noise is this in our house?” “Fear not, fear not, Flora; God is with us.” “Mother! and I lying in your bosom! My father surely is not out in the storm! O, I have had a most dreadful dream.” And with such mutterings as these, Flora relapsed again into that perilous sleep, which soon becomes that of death.

Night itself came, but Flora and Hamish knew it not; and both lay now motionless in one snow-shroud. Many passions, though earthborn, all divine,—pity, and grief, and love, and hope, and at last despair,—had prostrated the strength they had so long supported; and the brave boy, who had been for some time feeble as a very child after a fever, with a mind confused and wandering, and, in its perplexities, sore afraid of some nameless ill, had submitted to lay down his head beside his Flora’s, and soon became, like her, insensible to the night and all its storms!

Bright was the peat-fire in the hut of Flora’s parents in Glenco; and they were among the happiest of the humbly happy, blessing this the birthday of

their blameless child. They thought of her singing her sweet songs by the fireside of the hut in Glencreran; and tender thoughts of her cousin Hamish were with them in their prayers. No warning came to their ears in the sough or the howl; for fear it is that creates its own ghostlike visitings, and they had seen their Flora, in the meekness of the morning, setting forth on her way over the quiet mountains, like a fawn to play. Sometimes, too, Love, that starts at shadows, as if they were of the grave, is strangely insensible to things that might well strike it with dismay. So was it now with the dwellers in the hut at the head of Glencreran. Their Hamish had left them in the morning; night had come, and he and Flora were not there; but the day had been almost like a summer day, and they, in their infatuation, never doubted that the happy creatures had changed their minds, and that Flora had returned with him to Glenco. Hamish had laughingly said, that haply he might surprise the people in that glen by bringing back to them Flora on her birthday; and, strange though it afterwards seemed to her to be, that belief prevented one single fear from touching the mother's heart, and she and her husband lay down in sleep, unhaunted by any woful dream.

What could have been done for them, had they been told by some good or evil spirit that their children were in the clutches of such a night? As well seek for a single bark in the middle of the misty main! But the inland storm had been seen brewing among the mountains round King's House, and hut had communicated with hut, though far apart, in that wilderness where the traveller sees no symptoms of human life. Down through the long cliff-pass of Mealanumy, between Buchael-Etive and the Black-Mount, towards the lone House of Dalness, that lives

in everlasting shadows, went a band of shepherds, trampling their way across a hundred frozen streams. Dalness joined its strength; and then away over the drift-bridged chasms toiled that Gathering, with their sheep-dogs scouring the loose snows; in the van, Fingal, the Red Reaver, with his head aloft, on the lookout for deer, grimly eyeing the Correi, where last he tasted blood. All "plaided in their tartan array," these shepherds laughed at the storm—and hark! you hear the bagpipe play—the music the Highlanders love both in war and in peace.

"They think then of the ourie cattle,  
And silly sheep;"

and though they ken 'twill be a moonless night—for the snow-storm will sweep her out of heaven—up the mountain and down the glen they go, marking where flock and herd have betaken themselves; and now at nightfall, unafraid of that blind hollow, they descend into the depth where once stood the old Grove of Pines. Following the dogs, who know their duties in their instinct, the band, without seeing it, are now close to that ruined hut. Why bark the sheep dogs so? and why howls Fingal, as if some spirit passed athwart the night? He scents the dead body of the boy, who so often shouted him on in the forest, when the antlers went by! Not dead—nor dead she who is on his bosom! Yet life in both is frozen; and will the iced blood in their veins ever again be thawed? Almost pitch dark is the roofless ruin; and the frightened sheep know not what is the terrible Shape that is howling there. But a man enters, and lifts up one of the bodies, giving it into the arms of them at the door-way, and then lifts up



the other; and by the flash of a rifle, they see that it is Hamish and Flora Macdonald, seemingly both frozen to death! Some of those reeds that the shepherds burn in their huts are kindled, and in that small light they are assured that such are the corpses. But that noble dog knows that death is not there; and licks the face of Hamish, as if he would restore life to his eyes! Two of the shepherds know well how to fold the dying in their plaids—how gentlest to carry them along; for they had learnt it on the field of victorious battle, when, without stumbling over the dead and wounded, they bore away the shattered body—yet living—of the youthful warrior, who had shown that of such a clan he was worthy to be the chief.

The storm was with them all the way down the glen; nor could they have heard each other's voices had they spoke; but mutely they shifted the burden from strong hand to hand; thinking of the hut in Glenco, and of what would be felt there on their arrival with the dying or dead. Blind people walk through what to them is the night of crowded day-streets—unpausing turn round corners—unhesitatingly plunge down steep stairs—wind their way fearless through whirlwinds of life—and reach, in their serenity, each one unharmed, his own obscure house. For God is with the blind. So is he with all who walk on works of mercy. This saving band had no fear, and therefore there was no danger, on the edge of the pitfall or the cliff. They knew the countenances of the mountains, shown momentarily, by ghastly gleamings, through the fitful night and the hollow sound of each particular stream beneath the snow, at places where in other weather there was a pool or a waterfall. The dip of the hills, in

spite of the drifts, familiar to their feet, did not deceive them now; and, then, the dogs, in their instinct, were guides that erred not; and as well as the shepherds knew it themselves, did Fingal know that they were anxious to reach Glenco. He led the way, as if he were in moonlight; and often stood still when they were shifting their burden, and whined as if in grief. He knew where the bridges were, stones or logs; and he rounded the marshes where at springs the wild fowls feed. And thus Instinct, and Reason, and Faith, conducted the saving band along; and now they are at Glenco, and at the door of the hut!

To life were brought the dead, and there at midnight sat they up like ghosts. Strange seemed they, for a while, to each other's eyes; and at each other they looked as if they had forgotten how dearly once they loved! Then, as if in holy fear, they gazed on each other's faces, thinking that they had awoke together in heaven. "Flora!" said Hamish; and that sweet word, the first he had been able to speak, reminded him of all that had passed, and he knew that the God in whom they had put their trust had sent them deliverance. Flora, too, knew her parents, who were on their knees, and she strove to rise up and kneel down beside them; but powerless was she as a broken reed; and when she thought to join with them in thanksgiving, her voice was gone. Still as death sat all those simple shepherds in the hut; and one or two, who were fathers, were not ashamed to weep.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

## BERTHA CLERVILLE.

“BUT my father? — Edward — I cannot leave my poor father — not even to perfect your happiness! — No! I cannot leave my father.”

There was a pause after those words had been delivered in a sweetly-agitated voice, and a faint sound, as of some one endeavoring to check the rising sobs of bitter emotion; after which another voice said —

“It will be but the first burst of passion — the first short interval of sullenness and gloom — and you will be forgiven. Think, dear Bertha, think upon the long and happy years which we will share together; think upon the fervor of my love — nay, adoration — and say if one bold step shall be wanting to consummate our long-desired union.”

“I have thought, Edward, till thought is drowned by sorrow: I cannot, I dare not, think of it longer.”

As these words were spoken, two figures were seen to emerge from the deep shade of some old oak-trees, which stood like the tenacious representatives of by-gone days, into the mellow light of a full and brightly beaming moon — that lovely light

“Which every soft and solemn spirit worships,  
And lovers love so well!”

One figure was that of a tall and well-formed man; the other an apparently slight and delicate female, who sobbed and wept at intervals, as she proceeded slowly and timidly by the side of her companion, whose arm was tenderly thrown around her waist, and occasionally employed in straining her more closely to the heart which beat for her alone — a sort

of expressive eloquence, which sometimes does more rapid execution than all the boasted array of potent language can effect.

To the true understanding of this most veritable history, it is meet that I should now record all that I know of the amiable pair which I have introduced to public notice. Firstly, then, in honor and in place — for when shall lovely woman cease to take precedence? — Bertha Clerville was the only daughter of a rich old country gentleman — rich in paternal acres, and in one surpassingly beautiful child; and, secondly, Edward Forester, her adopted lover, was also a country gentleman, but of infinitely humbler *caste*. He was the only son of a litigious sort of spendthrift — a genus much too common amongst the *élite* of agricultural counties; and though it is true that he had passed to his final account, it was not until he had left the accounts of his successor in a wofully deranged condition. Clerville and Forester were contiguous proprietors, and the law-loving spirit of the latter had rendered him so peculiarly obnoxious to the former, that he even entertained a most inveterate hatred for his memory. But when could law avert the course of love? Born, as it were, together — bedewed by the same showers, and cherished by the same sunbeams, Bertha Clerville and Edward Forester were lovers in their very infancy, and their youthful hearts were insensibly intertwined before they became aware of the formidable barriers which their respected parents were raising between them. Love is proverbially blind — and so, it is said, is Law; at least Justice, who holds the magic balance, is so depicted. Certain it is, that the litigation of the parents prevented not the love of the children. — Thrown almost constantly together, they cherished the same sentiments, they followed the same amusements,

may, they cultivated the self-same flowers, and if there was one plant — one blossom — above all others — which Bertha loved, her Edward loved it too. There was also another secret sympathy which linked these guileless souls together: they had each, early, lost an affectionate mother, and were thus marked as it were by the far-felt hand of fate for friends, associates, lovers.

Whilst they were yet in childhood's golden time, the bitterness which rankled in the bosoms of their parents seemed to shed no blight on the heart-felt happiness of the children; and even Gerard Clerville himself would smooth down the hair of young Edward, and proudly declare him "the finest boy in the county." But when they arrived at that more uncertain period, when youth lingers, as it were, upon the landscape, unwilling to resign the dear delights of the festal scenes of by-gone hours to the fresh embraces of maturity, the bitter waters of the elder stream began to mingle with the sparkling crystal of the fresher fountain, and formed the earliest sorrow which their young hearts had been destined to know.

At length old Forester died, and his son, though far above the reach of want, was confessedly no match for the wealthy heiress of Gerard Clerville; and, as a necessary consequence, the beautiful Bertha was forbidden even to think of him! How lightly deem they of the human heart, who issue their proud mandates so peremptorily! Bertha was not undutiful; but she could not cease, at once, to think of one on whom alone for years her thoughts had perpetually rested; and, with every wish to obey a parent who was in no other respect unreasonable, poor Bertha did but think of the forbidden one the more! She saw no valid objection to him in the inequality of fortune; she knew that he would not waste his pa-

ternity on the incertitude of idle litigation; she knew him to be generous, ardent, sincere; she knew that he loved her as his own soul, and she hoped — what a jewel hope is in a lover's eye! — she hoped to soften the asperities of her parent, and unite herself forever with the man she loved.

Now, though Edward Forester was an honorable young man, a man of talent, and possessed of intelligence almost beyond his rank of life, yet truth compels me to declare that he had, in many of his stolen interviews, urged the affectionate girl to take the somewhat hasty step which we find him urging at the commencement of this narrative. As yet, however, his eloquent entreaties had been ineffectual, and, considering how powerful a pleader he had in her own bosom, that is saying much for the feminine endurance of Bertha Clerville. But constant assault reduces the most impregnable fortresses; and at length the worn-out heart of Bertha yielded to the soft solicitations of her impassioned lover, and slowly, very slowly and reluctantly, she consented to fly with him, and make her fond old father miserable!

The next night at midnight, when old Clerville had retired to his bed, was the time appointed by the inconsiderate lovers for their hasty flight. They were to pass as rapidly as steeds could carry them to the country town, whence, the indissoluble contract having been formed, they would return to the scene of bereavement, and the repenting daughter would sue for pardon at her father's feet.

There is, I am firmly persuaded, an index in every heart which points to rectitude, in the midst of every deviation; and the gentle heart of Bertha was not without this inward monitor, the "still small voice" of which was heard above the pleadings of affection, or the silvery tones of love. When Bertha met her



father in the morning at the breakfast table, she could not endure the kindness of his gaze; the unbidden tears filled her eyes, and fell fast down her cheeks, at the sight of the fond old man whom she was about to leave, even for so short a time, and on an errand so important. At dinner she was still more distressed; and when the hour for tea arrived, she pleaded absolute indisposition for her non-appearance. Whilst love and affection — if I may be allowed to draw so fine a distinction between terms generally deemed synonymous — were thus torturing the bosom of the now really unhappy Bertha, the hours were hastening on with unwearied rapidity; the shades of evening fell with their accustomed serenity; and the moon rose with almost more than her usual splendor; and now came Bertha's trying hour. It had for many a year been the custom of old Clerville, (and an endearing and truly parental custom, in my opinion, it is,) on retiring for the night, to kiss the bright lips of his daughter, and bid her a low-voiced, sweet "good night," to which she as sweetly did respond. On this occasion, the unsuspecting father kissed his child; but Bertha could not say "good night;" the very attempt was suffocation; she could but grasp his hand, and burst into tears. Clerville had noticed the altered manner of his daughter; but thinking it the effect of a transient indisposition, he imagined a few hours of rest would be an ample restorative, and, forbearing to distress her by mentioning it, he retired to his chamber.

With a solemn step, the almost broken-hearted girl descended to the scene of her appointment. It was her own little sitting-room, on the ground floor, the window of which, left invitingly open, looked into the spacious garden. Her impatient lover was there before her. "Bertha!" he murmured as she en-

tered; and Bertha, rushing into his arms, wept long and passionately upon his bosom.

"It has been a hard struggle," said she, at last, "and I had nearly failed beneath its force. O, Edward, this has been a day of unmingled misery to me."

"Repent not, dearest," said her lover; "it will be the last. Come, my love; delay is fatal."

"It is indeed!" said old Clerville, in a voice of thunder, as he emerged into the bright light of the moon, which came like a flood into the chamber through the open window, his frame dilated with rage, and his eyes flashing with the justly-roused indignation of an insulted parent. Edward stood abashed, like one detected in the act of stealing the brightest gem of all from the brilliant casket; he had no power of utterance. Bertha neither shrieked nor fled, but, like "dejected pity" by the side of "rage," she sank down in the posture of supplication.

"Worthless villain!" said Clerville, "would you rob me of my child? Begone, while yet my temper holds, or I may rob the gibbet of its own! Begone! the midnight burglar hangs in chains, but such a thief as you escapes with but an old man's execrations ringing in his ears. Begone, robber! midnight murderer of a parent's peace, begone!"

Bertha sunk prostrate on the floor in utter insensibility, and the young man moved as though he would have passed to her relief.

"What!" said Clerville, "will you dare, in my presence, to contaminate her with your touch? No! if she were stone dead at my feet, no hand of yours should raise her. Frontless wretch, begone!"

As if actuated by a sudden impulse, the young delinquent darted through the window, and disappeared,

whilst the afflicted father carried his still insensible child to her apartment.

With the accuracy of a veritable historian, I must now relate the cause which led to Clerville's unexpected share in this domestic drama. He had retired to rest, as I have intimated, and sleep fell like a mantle over him; but it was not the sleep of rest; his spirit was perturbed. Whether there exists some mysterious association between the dormant mind and what is actually taking place in waking life, I know not; but Clerville dreamt that his daughter was in danger; his attempts to rescue her awoke him from his troubled slumber, and so sensibly was he affected by his dream, that he instantly repaired to her apartment. His surprise must be imagined, when he discovered that she was not there; he determined on further search, and, guided by a sort of sacred instinct, he just arrived in time to hear the machinations of the two ardent, though injudicious lovers.

The effects of this distressing *déneusement* were almost fatal to poor Bertha; fever, followed by delirium, ensued, and weeks elapsed before she was able to leave her chamber. When, at last, with weak and faltering feet, she did leave it, a cold gleam, almost like that of dull insanity, was in her eye, and her discourse was wandering and unconnected. She had a peculiar aversion to being alone, and contemplated an open window with feelings excited almost to terror. Reason, however, did but waver for a moment on her deeply-shaken seat; the sight of a suffering parent, though dimly seen through the burning tears of silent anguish, recalled the goddess to her golden throne, and banished the insidious traces of insanity, but left securely seated in its place, her dull and melancholy ministrant — despair.

When she had fully recovered, a letter was placed in her hands, which contained the following:—

“Dearest Bertha,

I have heard of your severe sufferings, and I do not cease to curse myself as their unhappy author. I implore your forgiveness, and that of your injured father. O, how I abjure the adventure of that fatal night! It was as rash as it was vain—as uncounselled as it was unsuccessful. Blessed be the moment which awoke your unforgiving father, and restored you to his arms! I feel well assured that he never would have pardoned us, and misery would have fallen on that head which I would give my life to shelter. Farewell, Bertha; and, with that name, farewell to many a dream of happiness! Think of me sometimes—think, dearest girl, of one who can never cease to think of you—never cease to love you.

E. F.”

This brief epistle was fastened with a seal of saffron-colored wax, and impressed with the device of a broken heart; and I am told that, in the world of love, this is a touching allegory: in that bewitching domain, saffron is held to indicate the fact of being forsaken; and the device of the broken heart is the emblem of its fatal consequences.

Bertha read her letter many times, and then she hid it in her bosom, coldly adding, as she placed the device next her heart, “There may be some resemblance soon!”

But where had the runaway lover concealed himself! No one knew. The remnant of his property in the county was sold off, and rumor said that he had embarked his all in a large vessel which had suddenly sailed on a far-away voyage.

Time rolled on ; and if the wounds of Bertha's fruitless love were not healed, they were at least amply cicatrized, when she was called upon to sustain others, if not quite so poignant, yet of as lasting and impressive a character. The declining age of Clerville brought with it some accessories which that old gentleman could well have spared. The bank, in which he was a large depositor, stopped payment. The proprietors had speculated far beyond their means, and by their own ruin caused the ruin of many. This was the first blast of adversity, and old Clerville felt it bitterly, not only in his own large pecuniary investments, but also in those of his tenantry, who, being unable to pay their rents, resigned their farms into his hands, as the last and only compensation they could make to a liberal proprietor. And then came seasons of distress ; crops failed, and cattle died, and as a climax to the general amount of sufferings, the midnight fires of the heartless incendiary blazed out through all the southern heavens. It was indeed with a melancholy heart that the old man beheld his property vanishing from his view, like the gray mists of an autumnal morning before the rising sun ; and when he looked upon his daughter, he felt his losses and his sorrows in a twofold degree. Growing still more enfeebled, he sold the remainder of his property, and retired to spend his days with his child in a neat, small cottage, in one of the villages of the very county in which he had been one of the most considerable landed proprietors.

Truly has it been said, that there is nothing which tries the heart like adversity ; of the truth of this apothegm, Bertha Clerville afforded a noble instance. She left her father's mansion without a murmur — almost without a sigh. And if she did sigh, peradventure it was only when the thought crossed her mind

that she might have been the mistress of it under the guardianship of one she loved. I think, if such a thing were possible, that Bertha grew more attentive to all her father's wants; and when, at last, blindness stole over the visual orbs of the old man, — as if to complete the wreck of fortune, — she led him as a mother would lead a tender and delicate child. She read to him whole columns of the *County Advertiser*, (at that time in high request;) she sung to him; she watched his every movement, and anticipated his every want; and she did all so gently, with such a winning, grace-bespeaking tenderness, one would almost consent to have been old, — ay, and even blind, — to have been the object of so much sweet officiousness, to have partaken of the pure serenity which that gifted, generous creature shed around her.

One afternoon, a fine, mellow voice was heard in the village; it was an air of peculiar beauty; not one of the “melodics,” now so called, but a manly English ballad, which brought to mind, in plain, but touching terms, some unforgotten traits of by-gone days.

“Who is that singing?” said Clerville to his daughter.

“A mendicant, father,” said Bertha, “old, lame, and —”

“*Blind!*” said Clerville, with emphasis.

“Even so,” replied Bertha, bursting into tears, as the more proximate points of the similarity flashed upon her mind.

“Nay, nay,” said the old man, drawing his hand across his own rayless eyes, “thou shouldst be more a woman now; though old and blind, I am yet rich in thee, Bertha. Go, call the stranger in; we have a shilling still to spare him.”

“We have,” said Bertha, “and as it is your wish,



dear father, he should have it though it were our last."

"Noble girl!" ejaculated Clerville; "call the stranger in."

The stranger was called in. He was a fine old man of about sixty; there was a ruddy brown upon his cheek, and his thin white hair flowing profusely on his shoulders, gave him an appearance truly patriarchal. Clerville asked him how he came to travel, as he politely termed the mendicant's profession. The old man replied that he had seen better days —

The unbidden tears sprang to the eyes of poor Bertha.

And when his career was arrested by misfortunes, which he could neither avert nor sustain, he became a day-laborer in the fields; and when at length he lost his sight —

Here Bertha's tears fell faster than before.

He applied without scruple to the overseers of the poor. He confessed that at first he did entertain some feelings of unnatural pride; but when he began to "reason with himself," as he termed it, he came to the conclusion that there were far more pitiable objects in the world than a cheerful old man in a poor-house, manfully seeking that protection which the legal provisions of his country afford to those who are incapable of maintaining themselves. But, after all, when he did become an inmate, he found that he could not endure the confinement; his soul grew anxious for the freshness of her native fields; the sunshine and the showers were linked with her existence; they had grown together from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, and they could not now be separated. He sought and gained permission to rove about his native dales, and share the bounty of the generous, always with the privilege of

retiring to the work-house as his place of rest. He had no wish to die, he said; but he was not afraid of death, and if he might choose the time and manner of his departure, it should be at the close of a sweet summer day, at the foot of some green knoll, which he had bounded over when prosperity was upon him, and which he had trodden with manly resignation, when adversity had left him blind and helpless.

Such was the stranger's story, and Bertha regarded him with looks of the deepest compassion, as the fine lines of the poet rose involuntarily to her lips —

“ Confine him not;  
As in the eye of nature he has lived,  
So in the eye of nature let him die.”

The mendicant received his gratuity and departed, invoking blessing on the heads of his benefactors. For a space the brow of Clerville became troubled, and his breast labored with emotion, when he suddenly sought to relieve his awakened spirit in thanksgiving. He rose from his seat, and falling on his knees, he thanked that Providence which had dealt with him in mercy, and he prayed that he might retain his proper feelings of gratitude to Him who orders every thing; whilst his lovely daughter clasped her hands and bent over him with a look of the most angel-like affection, forming such a group of thanksgiving and beauty, as the chisel of Chantrey, exquisite as it is, has never yet achieved.

It was now nearly ten years since Edward Forester had expatriated himself from his native land; and in all that time it was never known that one line of intelligence had been received from him. Indeed, to whom was he to write? I know of but one who

could satisfactorily have answered that question. The truth is, that Edward had been, save by one, perfectly forgotten ; but now, by some sudden freak of fortune, he began to be recollected, and strange store of wealth was associated with his long-forgotten name. At length the County Advertiser, the most veracious of all country papers, announced the important fact as follows : —

“From information on which we can rely, we are authorized to state that E—— F——, Esq., the young gentleman who left this country several years ago, having amassed immense wealth in the Indies, is on the eve of landing on his native shore, determined to spend the remainder of his days on his own estate, in the manner most becoming the habits and character of an English country gentleman.”

No sooner was this gracious piece of intelligence duly circulated through the county, than some of the former dependants of the Foresters insisted upon going all the lengths of lunacy ; they rang the church bells ; they kindled bonfires — not, I am glad to say, in their landlords' stack-yards ; — they discharged sundry rusty pieces of ordnance, called fowling-pieces, to the great terror and dismay of many of the well-intentioned inhabitants ; and they would have baited a bull, but for the best reason in the world, namely, there was only one to be got, and it was so old, so stiff, and so utterly devoid of all proper spirit for such a ceremony, that the idea of a bull bait was formally abandoned, the committee of management having declared that he (the bull) was not fit to toss a bunch of radishes from his nose !

This boisterous joy, and the cause of it, was not long in reaching the cottage of old Clerville. Indeed Bertha had herself read the veritable fact in the all-important columns of the County oracle ; but her

trembling tongue and her quickly-throbbing bosom would not allow her to acquaint her father with the circumstance.

Here was a field for speculation! — the circumstances under which they parted — the lingering years which had elapsed — and the circumstances under which they were probably to meet again — all these thronged and coursed through poor Bertha's brain, till she was well nigh bewildered. At one time hope — that sovereign of the world — would raise his roseate standard in her bosom, and she would paint her lover, after all his ardent toils beneath the sultry skies of "gorgeous Ind," hastening home with his accumulations in his grasp, and new offers of love and attachment on his lips, and laying all at *her* feet — *hers*, who had loved him long and ardently, through good and through evil, through years of absence and neglect, in sickness and in health, during delirium, and in despair! — *hers*, who would have sacrificed every thing but honor, and who well nigh periled that for him; who would have been resigned to live alone for the love she bore his name — *hers*, who, next to her God, held him to be the highest object of deification in the universe. At another time, she would dwell upon the effects of long absence and ever-varying enterprise; how many scenes of high excitement had he not passed through, the least of them enough to banish her and all their rustic joys and recollections forever from his memory! and then there would come the last, the most unwelcome thought of all, — Came he alone from that far land of competence and crime? or was there not some lovely form already by his side, whose large and lustrous eyes were even now emitting all their sun-lent radiance on his countenance, whose swarthy brow was reclining on that very bosom, which once was

pressed by the pale querist alone? and when her thoughts took such a turn, she hid her face and wept, for she knew that if madness, long delayed, did come, it would be through that avenue that the frightful malady must pass.

Clerville, blind and broken down as he was in the comparison, was rejoiced to hear of the young man's success. It gave him no pang. He had lived to see the evanescent nature of wealth; and he prided himself on his knowledge of the world. He was anxious, however, for the effect upon poor Bertha. It was long since he could see the expression of her pale features; and he had become so habituated with her sighs, that from them he could catch no index of the feeling which was triumphing beneath. One morning, however, to his surprise, Bertha said, timidly, "Father, Edward is coming home!"

"Ay, Bertha," said Clerville, "they say so, my child; but be thou not deceived; he will not come to thee. No, my girl, he has now learnt the wisdom of the world, and he will carry his golden ingots to a higher, to a fairer market."

"Unjust, ungenerous, and unkind!" said Bertha, her gentle spirit roused by the ungracious opinion thus expressed on the absent object of her unbroken affection. "Edward will never be untrue to me, though I never see him more!"

"And yet he would have been untrue to me!" said the old man, with a slight tinge of vehemence in his manner.

Bertha rose at once, and threw her arms about his neck. "Father, for God's sake, let us not talk in this manner; I am not mad yet but, (and she pressed her hand upon her brow) I know not how soon I may be!"

At this moment a smart rap was heard at the outer

door of the cottage, and in the next moment the tall and manly form of Forester was standing on the floor beside them.

"Bertha!" said he, "my dear Bertha, I am come to lay my life and fortune at your feet."

Bertha was overpowered; she pointed for one moment at her father, and fainted in her long-lost lover's arms.

"Gracious Heaven!" said Edward; "Mr. Clerville, and blind! I did not hear of that!"

"Do not insult me, young man," said Clerville.

"No, no, no!" said Bertha, opening her eyes, and fixing them in a long look on the ardent features of her lover — "no, no, no! he will not, he cannot, he does not mean it!"

"I come not here to insult," said Edward; "I came to entreat — old men (and he pressed Clerville's hand fervently) — old men should forget —"

"And forgive," said the father, rising majestically, and pointing upwards with a slightly-tremulous hand. "Old, blind, and well nigh helpless — standing on the awful brink of dissolution — what have I to do with hatred more? My children, your trials have been many and severe; may Heaven bless you long together!"

"Amen, father, amen!" said the ardent lover, as he again pressed the blushing Bertha to his bosom.

And now I must hasten to a conclusion, having, like a skilful pilot, run my little narrative into a happy haven, after all the perils of, I fear, a tedious voyage. Clerville Manor was immediately repurchased, and the original proprietor reinstated as its ancient lord and undisputed master; and in about six months, a gay and gallant equipage was seen to issue from amongst the stately old oaks of which I have elsewhere spoken in my history; and, moreover,



that same equipage wended gayly towards the church, into which many a bright and happy countenance entered — and there was one white-haired, sightless old man, who clasped his hands in the serenity of silence, and seemed happier than they all! For my part, I had always thought that solemn matters were transacted in churches; guess my astonishment, therefore, when I found, after the return of the equipage, that the friends of Mr. Forester, now vastly swelled in numbers, under the name of tenantry, were determined to be seven times more mad than they were before! They roasted sheep and oxen without being at the trouble of cutting them to pieces — they drank whole barrels of ale, without the intervention of spigot and faucet — they rung, and rerung the bells — they kindled the bonfires — they discharged all the fowling-pieces; and the bull — but here I must pause — I think the bull was not baited after all.

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## LOVE'S RECOMPENCE.

It was, then, in that beautiful Vale of Vire, some twenty years ago, that Francois Lormier went out to take his last May walk with Mariette Duval, ere the relentless conscription called him from his happy home, his sweet valleys, and his early love. It was a sad walk, as may well be imagined; for though the morning was bright, and nature — to her shame be it spoken — had put on her gayest smiles, as if to mock their sorrow, yet the sunshine of the scene could not find its way to their hearts, and all seemed darkened and clouded around them. They talked a great deal,

and they talked a long time; but far be it from me to betray their private conversation. I would not, for all the world — especially as I know not one word about it — except, indeed, that Francois Lormier vowed the image of Mariette should remain with him forever — should inspire him in the battle, and cheer him in the bivouac; and that Mariette protested that she would never marry any body except Francois Lormier, even if rich old Monsieur Latoussefort, the great Foulan, were to lay himself and fortune at her feet; and, in short, that when his “seven long years were out,” Francois would find her still a spinster, and very much at his service.

“*Mais si je perdrais une jame?*” said Francois Lormier. “*Qu’est ce que c’a fait?*” replied Mariette. They parted — and first to follow the lady. Mariette wept a great deal, but soon after got calm again, went about her ordinary work, sang her song, danced at the village *fête*, talked with the talkers, laughed with the laughers, and won the hearts of all the youths in the place, by her unadorned and her native grace. But still she did not forget Francois Lormier; and when any one came to ask her in marriage, the good dame, her mother, referred them directly to Mariette, who had always her answer ready, and with a kind word and a gentle look sent them away refused, but not offended. At length good old Monsieur Latoussefort presented himself, with all his money-bags, declaring that his only wish was to enrich his gentle Mariette; but Mariette was steady, and so touchingly did she talk to him about poor Francois Lormier, that the old man went away with tears in his eyes. Six months afterwards he died, when, to the wonder of the whole place, he left his large fortune to Mariette Duval! In the meanwhile Francois joined the army, and, from a light,

handsome conscript, he soon became a brave, steady soldier. Attached to the great northern army, he underwent all the hardships of the campaigns in Poland and Russia; but still he never lost his cheerfulness, for the thought of Mariette kept his heart warm, and even a Russian winter could not freeze him.

All through that miserable retreat, he made the best of every thing. As long as he had a good, tender piece of saddle, he did not want a dinner; — and when he met with a comfortable dead horse to creep into, he found board and lodging combined. His courage and his powers of endurance called upon him, from the first, the eyes of one whose best quality was the impartiality of his recompense. Francois was rewarded as well as he could be rewarded; but at length, in one of those unfortunate battles by which Napoleon strove in vain to retrieve his fortune, the young soldier, in the midst of his gallant daring, was desperately wounded in the arm. Pass we over the rest. — Mutilated, sick, weary, and ragged, Francois approached his native valley, and, doubtful of his reception, — for misery makes sad misanthropes, — he sought the cottage of Madame Duval. The cottage was gone; and on inquiring for Madame Duval, he was directed to a fine farm-house by the banks of the stream. He thought there must be some mistake; but yet he dragged his heavy limbs thither, and knocked timidly against the door. “*Entrez!*” cried the good-humored voice of the old dame. Francois entered, and, unbidden, tottered to a chair.

Madame Duval gazed on him for a moment, and then, rushing to the stairs, called loudly, “Come down, Mariette, come down; here is Francois returned!” Like lightning, Mariette darted down the stairs, saw

the soldier's old great coat, and flew towards it — stopped — gazed on his haggard face and empty sleeve, and, gasping, fixed her eyes upon his countenance. 'Twas for a moment she gazed on him thus in silence; but there was no forgetfulness, nor coldness, nor pride about her heart; there was sorrow, and joy, and love, and memory, in her very glance. "O, Francois, Francois!" cried she, at length, casting her arms round his neck, "how thou hast suffered!" As she did so, the old great coat fell back, and on his breast appeared the golden cross of the legion of honor. "*N'importe!*" cried she, as she saw it, "*voila ta recompense.*" He pressed her fondly to his bosom. "My recompense is here," said he, "my recompense is here!"

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## THE YOUNG MINISTER AND THE BRIDE.

Few will deny the justice of the remark, that "truth is often stranger than fiction;" no one of much observation and experience, at least, will feel inclined to question the correctness of its application to the scenes and vicissitudes of life. There are, indeed, realities of no very unfrequent occurrence, which, in point of marvellous adventure, heart-thrilling incident, and surprise, may be said to exceed any thing that mere invention, or the most studied combination of ideal circumstances, can ever hope to effect. Had we only ampler opportunities of investigating those short and simple annals to which our great lyric poet so philosophically alludes, — could we

boast but the rudest chroniclers of those sudden revolutions and sweeping gusts of fortune connected with the fate of individuals and the people, as we do of courts and empires, — what inexhaustible sources of popular interest and instruction should we there find ! The most attractive novels would almost cease to charm, till we had first exhausted the more wonderful histories, — the domestic events and tragic adventures of living beings, even in the humblest sphere.

I was led into this train of reflection by recalling some singular occurrences of which a friend of mine and myself were casual witnesses more than forty years ago ; for I now feel these reminiscences of earlier days recurring with more and more force, as I gradually descend deeper into the vale of Time. My friend B—— had just completed a severe course of legal studies, which, together with carrying high honors at one of our universities, was found a little too much for his strength. To counteract the effects of his intense and unremitting exertions, he invited me to take a summer ramble with him among his native hills. He proposed to visit both the English and Scottish lakes, near the former of which was situated his father's residence ; to proceed next to the Highlands ; and, last of all, to pursue, "tour" in hand, the track of our great English Leviathan — that most majestic and magisterial of all travellers, in his *Boz-zonian* ramble among the Hebrides.

After remaining, during a few weeks, at the country-seat of my friend's father, we repaired to explore the extended and lofty range of hills that brings us, as it were, into the heart of the English lake scenery. On the second evening of our departure, we stopped at the little hamlet of D——, consisting only of a few shepherds' huts, in order to enjoy the glories of sunrise on Skiddaw after a night's repose. Here,

under the roof-tree of an old herdsman, who had been promoted to the rank of a guide, — a little publican, and, as far as excess in liquor was concerned, not a little of a sinner, — we were brought acquainted, during our evening chat, with some of the current reports of the village, relating to the affairs of our more important neighbors.

Near this little hamlet, it seems, at the foot of the hill stretching westward, lay the ample domains of the wealthy Lord L——, forming part of one of those fertile and cultivated districts, which betoken the near abundance of the rich, loamy soil of the northern graziers. Its present possessor had returned within the last year from the continent, to reside at the seat of his forefathers, and find employment for the well-lined coffers of his immediate predecessor. The new lord, we were informed, was now on the eve of forming a union with one of the fairest girls in the country, — the daughter of his father's old friend, the late member for K——, a gentleman who, by his imprudence, had left, at his death, a large family involved in considerable difficulties and embarrassment. The late Lord L——, however, had not only materially assisted them, but had even consented that the family union, long before projected between his friend's daughter and his own son, should still take place. This, too, was an object in which the mother of Margaret Dillon — already betrothed to the scion of L—— House before his departure for foreign lands — was more particularly interested, having several younger children almost wholly unprovided for. Circumstances, therefore, seemed to render it imperative on the eldest to fulfil her mother's wishes; and only by some strange perversity of fate was such an alliance likely to prove an unhappy one.



The lovely Margaret was then in her seventeenth year, while her intended lord was nearly as many summers older, and by no means of that prepossessing character and exterior, nor of that lofty reputation and rare report, calculated to win "golden opinions" from all manner of women. The marriage, however, was to have taken place on his return, without much consideration of reciprocal feeling, and had been delayed only in consequence of the sudden demise of his lordship's father. His return, we were told, had been marked by no expression of joy on the part of his tenantry and retainers; nor, what was more to be regretted, on the part of the intended bride herself, who was, on the other hand, said to be a favorite with all classes of her acquaintance.

If the new lord, however, had failed to make himself liked, this did not seem to be the case with a young clergyman in the vicinity, of the name of Maurice Dunn, whose noble look, and high, yet gentle bearing, we had already noticed on our approach, who respectfully saluted us, and whom we did not fail to recognize by the description and encomiums of the ancient herdsman. He was the eldest, we learned, of a large family, and, being a youth of talents, was, after receiving an excellent education, at no small sacrifices on the part of his father, appointed to a curacy near his native place. He was looked up to as the future staff of his family; for old Maurice Dunn was only one of those small landowners belonging to the better class of yeomanry—a class, unfortunately, now nearly extinct in England. In addition to his own little property, he had the chief part of his farm under Lord L——, by means of which, with laudable industry, he was enabled to support a numerous family, and bring up one of his

sons to a profession, — then always the worthy ambition of men of his class, — to say nothing of making himself comfortable during his latter days. Besides his own spiritual charge, his son, we are informed, was accustomed to assist the aged minister of another cure, taking upon himself, out of special good will, at least half the duty and the more distant visitations of the poor and sick, insomuch that it was hoped, by many honest parishioners, he would one day come to succeed old Mr. Penruddock in his rectory, as well as in his labors.

Among his most constant hearers were Mrs. Dillon and her daughter; and, in the character both of a pastor and a tutor, Maurice Dunn was admitted like a friend, more than a visitor, at the lady's house. Here his fine taste and natural skill in music, drawing, and almost every accomplishment, recommended him to his pupils far more than his knowledge of the severer branches of learning. But no one, in the circle he knew, boasted the same irresistible interest and attractions in his eyes as the beautiful, the graceful, and the gentle-souled, intelligent Margaret.

Was it possible, then, that, by any dark conspiracy of the fates, it had been the bounden duty of Maurice Dunn to unite the fair hand of the being he most adored on earth to another, to pronounce the nuptial benediction upon her as a bride, and to consign all his cherished love to unavailing bitterness and tears? From the rude, unvarnished account of our ancient chronicler, so dreadful a sacrifice appeared about to be made; and in that mode, and under those evil auspices, which leave not a moral possibility of escape.

Finding this melancholy wedding was to take place next day, and that the church lay in our route, we agreed, before retiring to rest, to accompany our worthy host to witness the ceremony.

The next morning saw us on our way to the church of L——, “some twa long miles,” as we were assured by our conductor, but which turned out, according to our more southern calculation, to be at least four. Upon our arrival, we found that the bridal procession was already there, and had passed into the interior of the holy edifice.

We took our station as near as the throng permitted us to the altar. The minister already stood before it; the bride and bridegroom at a little distance; and we could easily distinguish their countenances, and observe all that passed. The rest of the party comprised Lord L——’s friends, the bride’s, and those of the young minister; among the last of whom was seen his venerable father, whose eye frequently turned with an expression of pride and pleasure upon his son. That son, indeed, seemed one to deserve the admiration with which he was so generally regarded; — his noble figure, handsome features, and dignified air and deportment, contrasted strongly with the mean and insignificant appearance, spite of his girdled trappings, that marked the bridegroom. But what most riveted my attention, was the singularly resolute and concentrated expression in the features of the minister, as if they had been well schooled to some desperate task. Firm in spirit, and calm in mood, he looked like one whose thoughts were above, or absent from, all considerations of the scene by which he was surrounded; as if the world, its weal or woe, with all its vicissitudes, marriages, and deaths, were alike indifferent events to him. Yet a close observer might detect traces of something forced and strange, that excited a painful sensation in the beholder, and seemed to betoken little of a peaceful mind. And now my fancy began to fill up the rude and simple sketch of him, drawn by our

aged guide: after what I had heard, there was a meaning in all I saw. Sudden gleams of thought seemed to "come and go, like shadows" flitting across his brain, and darkening on his features, even against his resolute will. An unearthly paleness sat upon his brow, strongly contrasted with the hectic glow which flushed his cheek. There was a slight convulsive motion of the eyebrows and the edge of the lips, which neither the bent brow, nor the fixed expression of the mouth, could quite repress. The same nervous affection, I was near enough to observe, was in his hands — they trembled, though his general demeanor was firm and collected. What most struck me, were a restlessness and eagerness of purpose, mixed with a feeling of intense pain, which were plainly reflected in the face of our honest guide, and presented a perfect picture of rustic perturbation, curiosity, and awe.

I now also observed his father's eye more than once directed towards Maurice Dunn with an uneasy look, as if for the first time he had detected something that gave him pain. He then looked towards the bride and bridegroom with the same uneasy glance, as if to inquire the meaning of what he saw. Other eyes, too, were directed towards the minister; but he seemed too deeply absorbed in his own thoughts to heed what was passing around him. If his eye met another's, it was with fixed coldness and almost haughtiness of air; yet that pride appeared forced, as if there were something he wished to conceal from the scorn or pity of the world. To me, the expression of his face, though composed, was one of suffering, deep-seated and intense, — so well subdued, as scarcely to be detected without previous knowledge of the cause. It might be the effect of mere physical pain or sickness — not of the heart; and there seemed

too much pride in his stern eye to betray its existence, were it there. Altogether, his bearing was not that of a holy minister prepared to pronounce a nuptial blessing upon the happy, the beautiful, and young ; for what had that expression of pride and reckless indifference to do with an occasion like this ? On the contrary, he seemed to glory in despising all those human sympathies and attachments which he was there called upon to hallow and unite.

As thus stern he stood and looked, how fared it with that lovely and gentle bride, who had come to claim his nuptial benediction upon herself and her ill-assorted lord ? Had she, indeed, selected such a lover in some hour of wounded pride or scorn, when her heart had been crushed or wrung with anguish ? or was the marriage yet more fearfully her evil lot ? Was it with such a being she had wandered during the summer seasons of her love, amidst the forest bowers, and heaths, and hills of her native spot ? Was it with him she had visited the sorrowing and the sick, and gladdened the hearts of the orphan and the widow, and made the homes and hearts of the poor and comfortless sing for joy ? Ah, no ! HE was not her companion ; — it was with Maurice Dunn, that minister of wretchedness who was about to wed her to another, that she had talked in sweet communion of spirit, during these sacred and too well remembered walks. But they were driven to fulfil their evil destiny : there was no retreat, no escape for Maurice Dunn. He had vowed it, and to redeem his pledge he now stood a sacrifice at the altar of his God. He knew his love was hopeless, and she, too, knew it ; yet, had he spoken the word, she would have flown with him even to the uttermost ends of the earth. Alas ! this one hope she had garnered up in her heart as the last resource ; but he had urged it not ; and she

there stood before him, — all her woman's pride and desperation, added to the tortures of her love, summoned to bear her through the dreaded task. A strange, unnatural lustre shone in her eye; it could be seen through the folds of her veil; and one instinctively turned away from it with something of the same wild or perturbed feeling, — a feeling that seemed to spread its contagious sympathy to all around. Her face was exquisitely beautiful, but almost as white as the dress she wore; and she looked most lovely, in spite of the deep-seated sadness it betrayed. Her figure was strikingly graceful; her head was slightly drooping; but there was an air of dignity in her whole deportment, as if emulating that of him who stood before her in the fixed and concentrated passion of his doom.

It appeared to me as if there prevailed through the whole party a certain consciousness of something wrong, — of some struggle or impending evil to be encountered; but this I attributed to mere fancy, until subsequently it was remarked to have been felt by others as well as by myself.

While engaged in reading the marriage service, which he pronounced in a bold and clear tone, the young minister had his eye somewhat sternly fixed on the two beings whom he addressed; his calm brow, his lofty figure, and deep-toned voice, giving double solemnity to his words. At length he took the bride's hand, as if to place it in that of her intended lord; and it was then, for the first time, that one thrill of feeling seemed to shake his whole frame. He almost started back, as if he had trodden on a serpent; for he had felt that hand more deathly cold and trembling than his own. Each seemed to recognize the death-damp touch, and, shuddering, to shrink from it. To me it was evident that she sought



to release her hand at the moment when it was placed in that of the bridegroom; but the minister, recovering himself almost instantaneously, hurried over the remaining service, and still more rapidly uttered the nuptial blessing.

The fatal words were pronounced; and, as he closed the book, he raised his eyes to the bride's face as if to take one farewell look. Their eyes met; she felt and returned that look, but with a wild expression of woman's agony and reproach, which years have not since obliterated from my memory, nor from that, I think, of any one who witnessed it. It would appear as if till then she had believed it impossible, that he whom she loved would meet her there to execute so fearful and soul-rending a sentence on all her love. It appeared to have chilled the very life-blood in her veins; for, regardless of all else around her, she stood rooted to the spot, as if entranced in woe. She still kept her eye fixed on the minister, who had shrunk in apparent terror from that one heart-rending look; but, as if in answer to it, his own was now directed towards his father, surrounded by his numerous family. She understood him; it was the sole reply he could give; and, stretching out her hand to him, as if to beg his forgiveness for upbraiding him, she let her head fall upon his breast, and wept.

Thus was divulged the previous secret of their love — all that had before passed; thus were revealed their cruel sufferings, their vain prayers and tears, sternly enforced duty, and sad submission to their fate. This painful scene was accompanied by mingled murmurs and imprecations, or by sobs and tears, from every spectator; but a more trying crisis was at hand. With that one distracted look, and the tears of her he had just wedded to another wet upon his

bosom, were crowded the sufferings of the young martyr to duty and to love. After fixing his eye upon his father, and supporting the sobbing bride for a moment in his arms, he saw and felt no more. His heart was broken; agony had burst its walls. The blood rushed up in torrents through his mouth and ears, and he fell dead at the foot of the altar.

One piercing shriek was heard; it arose above every other voice, as the young, distracted bride threw herself in passionate agony on her lover's body; and the house of God resounded only with the voice of grief. Long insensibility came mercifully to her relief, and in that state the unhappy lady was borne from the church, her white bridal robes stained with the blood of him to whom she would have been happy to have been united even in death. Nor was it very long before the prayer which ever after rose to her lips was granted to her sufferings.

Accompanied by my friend, I instantly left the place; and, in the deep, sequestered solitudes of the woods and mountains, we for a time sought to forget the painful impression this event had produced.

It was about two years after our return, that we requested one of our friends, then on a visit near the village of L——, to inquire into the fate of the unhappy bride. He visited the churchyard, and near the humbler stone that marked the grave of Maurice Dunn, rose the family vault of the lords of L——. The last name that had been there inscribed was that of Margaret, countess of L——, who died in the 21st year of her age. It was only the second of her ill-starred marriage.

## TRADITION OF ROLANDSECK.

ROLANDSECK is, in itself, a solitary ruin ; but it commands prospects of most delicious scenery, romantic and picturesque beyond description. The rock upon which it stands overlooks the island of Rolandswert, which is in the middle of the Rhine.

The remains of this ruin on the side of the river are in good preservation, but, on the opposite side, they are decayed, and overgrown with ivy and brambles. Schiller has made this scenery the subject of an interesting ballad, but has, in his description, transferred it to Switzerland. The tradition of the origin of this castle is as follows :—The noble cavalier, Roland, nephew of Charlemagne, during the long, and, to him, wearisome repose of peace, wandered frequently in the environs of Ingelheim, and from thence down to the shores of the Rhine. Overtaken by night in one of his rambles, at the entrance of the domains of a castle, he requested the hospitality of the owner, and was immediately received by him with that noble frankness which so distinguished this chivalric age. The cavalier of the castle grasped his hand with that hearty cordiality which bespoke the meeting of old friends, rather than that of strangers, and Hildegonde, his daughter, set before him bread and wine, the symbol of hospitality, with all that graceful *naïveté* for which her youth was distinguished. The goblet was embossed with the family arms of the host, and Hildegonde presented it with that amiable modesty which increased the interest her unfolding attractions created in every beholder. Roland accepted the goblet from her hand, and, what he thought was singular, his own hands trembled, and

he blushed, he knew not why. "What!" said he to himself, "is this the firm arm, of which, when holding the cimeter, a muscle never flinched? Is this the same countenance of which hordes of Saracens could never disconcert a feature?" He recovered himself, and began to speak of the feats of war, and of the great political views of his renowned sovereign. They retired to rest, but Roland could not close his eyes; the image of Hildegonde continually presented itself before him.

The next day he prepared to depart; he felt a difficulty in making known his name, lest they should deem it necessary to pay him that homage which a name so justly celebrated every where received. Old Raymond, his host, was transported beyond measure at having entertained the hero of chivalry within his walls, and pressed him to pass another day in his castle, which he consented to do. The prudent Hildegonde said not a word; but it was easy to see this arrangement was not displeasing to her.

Roland remained many days. His passion for Hildegonde increased so as to overcome all his timidity, and he only waited for a proper opportunity to declare himself. This occasion soon offered. Walking one day in the grounds, he found Hildegonde sitting on a bank, her hands joined as if in prayer. Roland approached her, and was studying how he should commence the conversation, when Hildegonde plucking a rose from its branch, Roland requested her to give it to him, saying, "No symbol of remembrance of any fair dame has hitherto decorated the plumes of my helmet, and, when other cavaliers have boasted of the charms and virtues of their chosen fair ones, my untouched heart has responded in silence." The countenance of Hildegonde was instantly covered with crimson; she was surprised,

and taken off her guard: a movement of her hand seemed to indicate a wish to give him the rose, yet a modest circumspection seemed to make her waver. But the eyes of Roland entreated; their silence was so expressive, that she acceded to the first impulse, and, in giving the rose to him, said, "That which is beautiful is of short duration." Roland took courage, spoke of his love, and Hildegonde with a look told him, that he need not be in doubt of a suitable return. The lovers vowed eternal fidelity; and Roland obtained her consent, that, at the close of the approaching campaign against the infidels, he should return to the Rhine, and claim her as his bride. Adieus are generally tranquil, but they are melancholy. A simple pressure of the hand was all that their emotion permitted; their eyes, however, declared eloquently the sentiments which their faltering tongues could not express.

Hildegonde passed the period of absence in the most secluded manner. She thought of nothing but the news expected from her lover. At length it came — news of bloody combats, of perilous actions, of deeds of heroic bravery; and, the name of Roland always exalted above all others, the general subject of his exploits became the song of the boatmen on the Rhine. Months, however, passed away, and the long year of absence from him she held most dear in the world was about to close; and it finished with the happy intelligence of a glorious peace, which would enable our hero to return covered with laurels.

One night a cavalier appeared at the castle gates, and requested the hospitality of Raymond until the following day. It proved to be one of Roland's companions in arms, a brave warrior, who had followed Charlemagne in this famous expedition. Agitated and restless, Hildegonde at length ventured to

speak of Roland. "Alas!" said the stranger, "I saw him fall by my side, covered with glory, but pierced by mortal wounds." Hildegonde ceased to speak; she not even shed tears, which would so much have relieved her oppressed heart. Absorbed by the sole thought of her loss, she stood as immovable and inanimate as a marble statue. After eight days spent in the most profound grief, she took the resolution of quitting the world, which now contained nothing of interest to her; and, having obtained her father's sanction, she entered the convent of Nonenworth, and there took the veil. The bishop of the diocese being allied to her family, the term of her probation was shortened; and three months had scarcely elapsed before she had pronounced her vows. A fatal precipitation! which brought misery and death upon two devoted lovers.

Roland suddenly made his appearance at the castle of Raymond, to which Hildegonde had forever bade adieu; he came to seek her and fulfil his vows, by leading her to the altar. Deep wounds had reduced his strength, and he fell exhausted from the loss of blood, which had given rise to the report of his death. He had, however, met with friends, who had been assiduous in their care of him, and had restored him to health. He now heard, with grief, of the indissoluble ties which Hildegonde had formed, and which separated her from him forever. The arms which had covered him with glory he now threw off with disgust, and, retiring to the neighborhood of Rolandswert, he built the castle of Rolandseck, upon a rock which overlooked the convent of Nonensworth, and which he named his hermitage.

Here he spent whole days at the door of his cell, with his eyes riveted upon the spot where his faithful Hildegonde languished out her days. At the sound



of the matin-bell he rose; and, listening to the angelic voices of the choir, frequently he thought he could distinguish the voice of Hildegonde; and, when the evening star had risen, and signified to all around that the hour of repose was at hand, if he could but discover the glimmering of some light from the convent, when all the rest was in darkness, he felt that that was the cell of his dear Hildegonde, who then watched and prayed for the power of resignation. Two years, passed in these solitary and mournful occupations, had wasted his strength. One morning, as he was, as usual, watching the cloister, he saw persons digging a grave in the place appointed for the eternal repose of the servants of God. A secret voice whispered him, that it was for Hildegonde. He inquired, and learned the fatal truth. For the first time he descended to the holy habitation, which hitherto he had held sacred, not daring to profane it by his presence, whilst his heart was agitated by feelings so earthly. He assisted at the last sad rite, threw the earth upon the remains of his dearly beloved, joined his ardent aspirations with those of the nuns for the eternal repose of her soul; but, overcome with grief, he returned home, and was found, shortly afterwards, in his usual seat at the door of his cell, with his eyes fixed upon the cloister, but fixed in death. He was allowed to be buried in the same place, and near to her who alone in the world had rendered him insensible to glory.

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